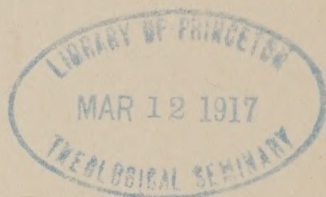


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The genius of Protestantism

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THE GENIUS OF PROTESTANTISM

A BOOK FOR THE TIMES

BY THE
✓
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AUTHOR OF
"THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CROSS," "DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?"
"THE GOSPEL OF A RISEN SAVIOUR," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

FOR the past fifteen years it has been the privilege as well as duty of the author to take a class of Senior Freshmen in Trinity College, Dublin, over the history of the Reformation. He has in consequence become more deeply interested every year in the meaning of the Protestant movement. The more he studied its inner history and acquainted himself with the writings of the Reformers, the more convinced he became that it was an honest effort to get back to what was primitive and apostolic, and that it stands for all that is best and most hopeful in the last four hundred years.

Romanism, on the other hand, seems to give the primitive and apostolic the Go-Bye, and to set up as a bran-new religion. The Council of Trent, for example, added no less than twelve new articles of faith to the Nicene Creed, and Romanism, not content with these, has been diligently adding others since, until a climax has been reached in the claim of infallibility set up in 1870 on behalf of the Pope. With an infallible Pope on her hands, she can now furnish any number of new dogmas which she may from time to time deem expedient; and the world has no guarantee of ever having her faith in its final form.

Between two systems which treat so very differently "the faith once for all delivered to the saints," it ought not to be difficult to decide. No thoughtful inquirer will commit himself to Rome's policy of mere expediency, when he has the

alternative of a completed Canon and the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. No one, moreover, will quarrel with the Reformation who has taken the time and the trouble to appreciate the Protestant spirit.

There are some, the author knows, who profess regret at the Reformation, and who try to belittle its importance. Belonging to a sacerdotal party, which claims a mysterious apostolical succession, they fancy they can without danger pose as rival priests to the sacrificing priests of Rome. And ingenious efforts are made by archbishops and others to make out of the Lord's Supper a "eucharistic sacrifice," and to claim all the pretended advantages of the Italian priesthood. The sacerdotalism indulged in, however, is an unscriptural anachronism, as this book shows, and constitutes just now the weakness and danger of Protestantism.

If Christ's ministers, instead of posing as a special priesthood (which they in the present dispensation are not), would only take their stand in the power of God-given inspiration as "the prophets" of this new age, the Christian Church would immediately enter upon a new era. In Old Testament times the "prophets" were the most influential class, more influential in great crises than either "priests" or "kings"; and the same influence will always wait upon him who is a real *prophet*. This the Christian minister ought to be, according to the Protestant idea. Protestantism, in short, would substitute the reign of the prophet for the reign of the priest; and make the prophets' mission the exposition and application of "the truth as it is in Jesus," the only Mediator between God and man, and the rightful "Lord of all!"

While acknowledging very gratefully what he owes to others, the author cherishes the belief that he has expounded the inner meaning of Protestantism with some measure of freshness, so as to warrant his calling his work a "Book for the Times." He will indeed be thankful if his book helps some of his fellows to appreciate more thoroughly the Protestant movement, and to contribute, as they have opportunity, to its ultimate triumph. He should add that his statements about Roman doctrine and discipline rest on the Canons of Trent, the Catechism of the Council, and the Creed of Pius IV.; all authorities to which the Church of Rome is committed. It will in consequence be impossible for impartial thinkers to evade the conclusions of the book.

DUBLIN, *February* 1900.

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THE GENIUS OF PROTESTANTISM

CHAPTER I

THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS

§ 1. *The Plan adopted in the Delivery of the Christian Faith*

IN setting out upon an exposition of PROTESTANTISM, we cannot do better than consider the plan adopted by God in the delivery of the Christian faith. It is set before us by St Jude, whose epistle is accepted by Romanists as well as by Protestants as genuine and authentic. We may accept of Jude's statement, therefore, as an *axiom* in our discussion. His words are these: "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (v. 3—R.V.). It is plain from these words that in his days the faith was in peril. But he did not in consequence summon a meeting of clergy to debate what had better be done. On the contrary he took his pen and sat down to write a rousing circular letter "to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ" (v. 1—R.V.). It was a rally of the saints, the Christian people, he desired in defence of the faith. Moreover, he is careful to affirm that the faith was "once for all (*ἀπαξ*) delivered," not to the Church, as such, nor even to the apostles as to a special class, but "to the saints" in the word's wide and generous meaning. He manifestly held that the faith was something an ordinary saint could

understand and receive; something he could preserve and defend in the proper fashion.

God's plan according to St Jude was, therefore, to deliver once for all what is called "the faith," a royal, generous endowment, and then to call upon the persons who received it to preserve it and to transmit it in its entirety.

Strange to say, the idea has been circulated in recent times for controversial purposes that a different plan was adopted. The deposit was made over, we are assured, to a certain Church, which has been impelled by the Spirit to reveal the faith in instalments as the faithful are able to bear it. The deliverance has been according to a law of *development*, and the faithful are to take any novelty in the way of doctrine which the Church proposes, and to accept of it as from God Himself.¹ Accordingly, doctrines which have no existence in the Word of God, doctrines which are not there even in germ, are to be taken as part and parcel of God's revealed will. Thus the invocation of saints, the immaculate conception of the Virgin, the infallibility of the Church and the infallibility of the Pope have been within our own memories launched as dogmas which the faithful must receive as part of the faith on pain of damnation.

Now the statement of St Jude puts all these theological novelties out of court. The very fact of a doctrine being an absolute novelty brands it as *not* belonging to the Christian faith. In fact we are warranted in affirming that "all that is true is old; with its converse, all that is new is false." The faith is no new-fangled invention, but a venerable first-century deliverance. Upstart, parvenu doctrines proceeding from mere men may, consequently, be rejected with perfect safety as forming no part of the Christian faith.

¹ Cf. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* by Cardinal Newman—passim.

§ 2. *The Guarding and Defence of the Faith culminating in the formation of the Canon*

When we consult St Jude again to ascertain, if possible, what we are to understand by "the faith," we find him speaking about the "common salvation," and about certain ungodly men who denied "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." The faith in St Jude's idea related to a Person who had come to be at once our Saviour and our Lord. The faith reached the world not in cold, abstract propositions, but in warm, concrete embodiment, in the Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He came into the world as the revelation of God, the revelation of an infinite love; and He carried through the revelation by means of a perfect life, and a perfect self-sacrifice, backing up by living and dying the most wonderful and original teaching, and completing the cycle of revelation by a resurrection out of death, an ascension into heaven, and a reign at the right hand of God. Hence the apostles and primitive evangelists communicated the faith in the first instance by "preaching Christ." They felt that the faith all clustered round the Person, and that Jesus was, as He declared Himself, "THE TRUTH" (John xiv. 6).

But we can easily understand that such an important deposit as that of the Christian faith could not be long left to the uncertainty of oral transmission. Moreover, when Jesus was about to leave His disciples He promised them the Spirit as the "Spirit of truth" to guide them "into all the truth" (John xvi. 13—R. V.) as the word is literally. They were moved, and so were their companions to commit to writing the deposit of the faith. In due season the books now regarded as Canonical were produced. The four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse came into their present shape, as the effort of

the first century saints to preserve and transmit the faith.¹

It is most important that the exact state of matters should be understood. If we believed some partisans we should imagine that the great "deposit" had been made over in some mysterious manner to a corporation called "the Church," and that the Church with this as capital has been able as a great monopolist to finance the Christian centuries, doling out its capital as it deems best. But this is all the purest assumption; it has not the very slightest historic basis. As a matter of fact the faith was offered to as many as would receive Christ. Those who did not, that is, would not receive Him "went empty away"—they missed the great endowment. But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, and these saintly souls became the custodians of the new faith. As we look at the recipients we are surprised. They are fishermen and tax-gatherers and women from various social circles, ay, and women from the streets. But they become saints by receiving Christ's salvation; they become subjects by acknowledging Christ as King. The faith cannot be difficult to understand or to receive when such despised and poor people can become its repositories. But when a soul receives the Spirit and has the soul's eye purged, he can appreciate what God has given us in Jesus Christ our Lord. And so St Paul writes to the Corinthians, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base

¹ It is not affirmed of course that our canonical books as we have them came as first copies from the companions of our Lord. They may have had profitable and deliberate revision.

things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. i. 26-29). Now these primitive believers knew that to them the faith was committed. How did they discharge their great trust? Some of them died for the faith. This was one way of preserving it. "The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church." The world began to see that there must be reality in the Christian faith when plain men and women were transfigured by it into courageous martyrs. And some of them before they suffered translated the great deposit into literature. Yielding to the inspirations from above "these *weak* men, these *illiterate* men, these stupid and *intractable* men *were suddenly endowed with the highest knowledge*. They became instantly wiser than the Jews, wiser than Abraham, wiser than Moses, wiser than Solomon, wiser than the Romans, wiser than the Greeks. They understood the law, they understood the gospel; things past, things future, things invisible, even the hidden mysteries of the Kingdom of God, are known to them. They bring forth things new and things old as from an exhaustless treasury. To the pious they are sons of consolation; to the impious they are sons of thunder. They confront the Sanhedrim, they encounter the Epicureans, they silence the Stoics. They deliver prophecies, they promulgate laws, they perfect and consummate a system so matchless, so transcendent, as to have become and remain the glory of the Church and the admiration of the world; a system replete with the most exalted and sublime ideas of God, with the most accurate and comprehensive judgments of man; a system containing the most exact and striking presentation of the civic and social relations, together with the rights and obligations springing out of them; a system perfect and finished, in which

nothing is defective, *nothing* redundant; a system which requires no revision, which admits of no emendation; a system so holy, so true, so universal and unchanging in its principles, as to be like the laws of nature and of God, suited to all stages of society, to all nations and ages of the world.”¹ What we have to observe is, then, that the New Testament is simply the effort of these first-century saints to preserve and transmit the faith. And, as the late Dr Dale has well observed, “Those sacred books were written by elect saints in discharge of the same trust that has been inherited by ourselves. They stand apart. They have an exceptional authority. But they illustrate the fidelity which is required of the saints of all succeeding generations; and in our age, as in all past ages, the effective defence of the faith lies, under God, with living men and women who, through Christ, have received the remission of sins and the supernatural life and the grace and light of the Holy Ghost.”² The determination of the Canon, moreover, was the work of the saints, and not the work of a corporate Church, as partisans represent it. The books which won their way into the “Divine Library” of the New Testament were exactly those which had been received by the “assemblies of the saints,” and were recognised by the faithful as *inspired literature*. In fact, we can give no other account of the formation of the Canon than that it was the general judgment of the believing people upon this all-important point of the Divine delivery of the faith. These books contain it; other books do not. It was the congregations where the books were read that decided which should be received and preserved. In this way did the saints of the early centuries contend earnestly

¹ Cf. *The Resurrection of Christ*, by Eliphalet Nott, D.D., LL.D. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1872, p. 66.

² Cf. Dr Dale's *Fellowship with Christ*, p. 93.

for the faith. The limits of the Canon, says Bishop Westcott, "were fixed in the earliest times by use rather than by criticism; and this use itself was based on immediate knowledge. For it is of the utmost importance to remember that the Canon was never referred in the first ages to the authority of Fathers or Councils. The appeal was made not to the judgment of men, but to that of Churches, and of those particularly which were most nearly interested in the genuineness of separate writings. And thus it is found that while all the canonical books are supported by the concurrent testimony of all or, at least, of many churches, no more than isolated opinions of private men can be brought forward in support of the authority of any other writings."¹

§ 3. *The Faith advantageously epitomized in the Ancient Creeds*

The necessity of epitomizing the faith very speedily arose in connection with the rite of Baptism. Indeed, we have traces of confessions made in the time of our Lord by His disciples before their baptismal work began. Thus Nathanael declared at his first interview with Jesus, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel"; and Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"; and at a later time Peter on behalf of the other disciples cried, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast words of eternal life, and we have believed and known that Thou art the Holy One of God" (John i. 49, Matt. xvi. 16, John vi. 68-69—the last is regarded as the true reading). There can hardly be any doubt that the Ethiopian eunuch and the Philippian gaoler would before baptism make a brief confession (Acts viii. 37, xvi. 31-33). And such a passage

¹ Cf. Westcott's *General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament*, sixth edition, p. 501.

as Rom. x. 9 seems to provide an epitome of the faith: "If thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." In 1 Cor. xv. 4, St Paul provides us with an important epitome, when he says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, etc." Traces of this epitomizing spirit may be found also in 1 Tim. iii. 16, 1 John iv. 2, 2 Tim. i. 13, and Heb. vi. 2.¹ But what concerns us here more particularly is the fact that the epitomizing of the faith went on in presence of the heresies of the early centuries until we find it expressed by the Apostles' Creed as the epitome of the West, and the Nicene as that of the Eastern Churches. The Apostles' Creed is now believed to be that of the Roman Church, and from Rome it spread with but slight modifications over all the Churches of the West. We do not, of course, need to believe the tradition that each of the Twelve Apostles contributed on the Day of Pentecost a clause to the Creed; but we need have no doubt that it is a fair epitome of the apostolic faith.

The Nicene Creed, on the other hand, gives us the epitome which seems in the first instance to have commended itself to the Church at Cesarea. It was taken by Eusebius and laid before the Council of Nicæa in 325, which accepted it; it was ratified later on first in the Council of Constantinople in 381, and finally in that of Chalcedon in 451. It gives the summary which commended itself to the Eastern Churches.²

¹ Cf. Swainson on *The Nicene and Apostles' Creeds*, London, 1875, pp. 13, 14.

² These facts about the Creeds are taken from *A Comparative View of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, illustrating their History and Common Origin*, by Dr Sanday, and privately printed. Details can be obtained in Harnack's article on the *Apostolische Symbolum* in Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, last edition. Also in the works of the specialists upon this subject, Caspari, Kattenbusch, and Zahn.

This faith, which is epitomized in the Creeds, is of a very substantial and far-reaching character. We have only to refer to such a work as Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, based as it is upon the Apostles' Creed, to see how much the epitomes imply. Out of the first article of the Creed this scientific theologian deduces his doctrine of God as Creator, Conservator, and Governor of all things, revealed in Scripture as a Trinity of Persons in a unity of essence. In the second article of the Creed he finds his doctrine of Redemption, the Son of God having come into our world to die for the salvation of lost men, and having risen, and ascended to the right hand of God, whence He is to come at last to judge the quick and dead. In the third article of the Creed, he finds his doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the agent in our recovery, and is led to expound faith, justification, and the other graces bestowed upon us by the Spirit. In the fourth article of the Creed, he finds his doctrine of the Church, that "Communion of Saints" which the Holy Spirit has had in view in the individual conversions, and which He sustains by the preaching of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, and Prayer. It will thus be seen that a whole system of theology may be educed from these ancient Creeds.¹

§ 4. *These Ancient Creeds are accepted alike by Romanists and by Protestants*

"The two venerable Creeds," to which we have just referred, "are to this day the common doctrinal bond of union between the three great branches of Christendom—

¹ A very able account of the *Origin and Development of the Nicene Theology*, with some reference to the Ritschlian View of Theology and History of Doctrine, will be found in the L. P. Stone Lectures delivered in Princeton Theological Seminary in January 1896, by the Rev. H. M. Scott, D.D., of Chicago, and issued by the "Chicago Theological Seminary Press" in 1896.

the Greek, the Latin, and the Evangelical—and between the different ages of the Church. They can never be abolished or superseded. They carry with them an authority and force as no other confession.”¹ The authors of the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* had a different idea about the origin of the Apostles’ Creed from what criticism allows us to entertain to-day, but they accept and expound the Creed. The Nicene Creed is also accepted by the Church of Rome, and the clause about the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father was insisted upon, notwithstanding the opposition of the Eastern Church. Now the acceptance of these epitomes of the Christian faith by Protestants and Romanists alike will help to show that *Protestantism is no mere negation*! It is an earnest contention, in the spirit demanded by St Jude, for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. For it will not do to pretend that the Church of Rome has “kept the faith.” It will not do to pretend that she has the positive truth contained in Protestantism and something more. It must be remembered that the Church of Rome has so corrupted the faith, once for all delivered to the saints, that it must be a serious difficulty for her devotees to appreciate the gospel of the grace of God. It was no mere negation for which the Reformers contended, but positive truth which had been corrupted and falsified by mediæval superstition. “It is often stated,” said the late Bishop O’Brien, “sometimes insidiously, sometimes, it may be supposed, ignorantly, that the whole difference between us and Rome is that she has added certain errors to the truth, and that we have rejected them;—so that whatever is positive and substantive in our religion, is common to it with Romanism; and in whatever they differ, ours is but *negative*. But, however current it is, this is a false

¹ Cf. Schaff’s *Christ and Christianity*, London, 1885, p. 138.

and injurious representation. It is a true account indeed of a part of our differences with Rome; but it is altogether erroneous as regards another part. Rome has not merely added to the faith certain doctrines which we hold to be false, but she has added to the substance of some fundamental doctrines, which can receive no addition without being corrupted and falsified. And with regard to such additions, it would be altogether a mistake to describe her as holding the truth and something more. She cannot make the addition without converting the truth into its opposite. And the correct account to be given of our difference in such cases is: that we hold the truth, and that she rejects it, and holds in its stead her own corruption of it; while our doctrine is, to say the least, no less substantive and positive than hers. This is plainly the case in our leading differences. When we assert, for example, the Rule of Faith is Scripture *alone*, we surely assert a positive, not a negative, truth. And when Rome asserts that it is Scripture and Tradition, she plainly cannot be described as holding the truth that we do, and something more. The effect of the addition which she makes is manifestly, to deny and reject the truth as held and set forth by us. Again, the same is no less true of our differences concerning the manner of a sinner's Justification before God. We hold that *he is justified by Faith only*. Here is surely no negation, but a positive doctrine, if there be any. You know the complicated scheme of Justification which Rome has substituted for this simple truth. It is unnecessary to analyse it in order to show that, in this momentous matter, she does not hold what we do, together with something more. No one who is acquainted with the Roman Doctrine of Justification, I suppose, would be likely to fall into such a mistake. But the Council of Trent has itself guarded against the possibility of it, by expressly anathematising all who maintain that a

*sinner is justified by Faith only."*¹ It will now be evident that Protestantism is an earnest contention for positive truth in opposition to the corruptions of Rome. The faith has by the Church of Rome been falsified. She has made the gospel very largely of none effect by her traditions. It is the duty of all men to try to appreciate the exact issue and to take sides accordingly.

¹ Cf. Bishop O'Brien's *Charge to the Clergy of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin* at his ordinary visitation in September 1845, London, 1846, pp. 197-199.

CHAPTER II

ADDITIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS WHICH CAN CLAIM NO SCRIPTURAL WARRANT

§ 1. *Summary of the Points of Agreement between Romanism and Protestantism*

WE are not likely to do full justice to Protestantism if we do injustice to the Romanism which preceded it, and still confronts it. Notwithstanding what has been said in the opening chapter, we must recognise the fact that Romanism has served an important providential purpose. When Europe was disorganised through the invasion of the Vandals, and a fallen Roman empire demonstrated how superficial the subjugation of Europe had been, it was the Church which helped to chain the wandering warriors to the soil, to create a love for the land and for nature, and so to prepare for the patriotism of more modern times.¹ We must also believe that down the ages many souls within her Communion have found salvation in spite of the corruptions in her Creed and worship. There must be such truth within the system as sufficed for their salvation. And if we believed interested controversialists such as Bishop Bossuet and Bishop Doyle, the points of agreement between the systems outnumber and outweigh the points of difference, so that reunion might become something more than a dream. We shall see further on, however, that reunion with Rome is hopeless by

¹ Cf. Hebbard's *Secret of Christianity*. Boston: Lee & Shepherd, 1874, p. 124, etc.

reason of the terms she proposes. Meanwhile it will serve the cause of truth to point out briefly the points of agreement. In the first place, there is a measure of agreement in the views entertained about the *Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*. Of course the Church of Rome adds the Apocrypha and Tradition to the Holy Scriptures to constitute the rule of faith; but "although the councils of Florence and Trent have inserted these (apocryphal) books in their Canon of the Old Testament, Catholic theologians do not scruple to draw a marked line of distinction between them and the books that were ever acknowledged as canonical. They make a distinct class of the former and denominate them Deutero-canonical; thus limiting them to a sort of second-rate species of inspiration."¹ And if we may judge from the Pope's Encyclical Letter of 1893 on "The Study of Holy Scripture," the Church of Rome now entertains a theory of inspiration of the most mechanical description, and believes that every word was dictated by the Holy Ghost. No Protestant can have greater reverence for Holy Scripture than the Pope professes. The pity is that such a dictated literature is not regarded by Romanists as a sufficient rule of Faith!²

In the second place, there is agreement between the two systems regarding the all-important doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity*. This is implied in the acceptance by both of the Ancient Creeds, which are eminently Trinitarian in their structure. A quotation from the Catechism of the Council of Trent will put in a clear light the orthodoxy so far as the Divine nature is concerned of the Church of Rome: "In these words ('His only Son' in the apostles'

¹ Cf. Rev. D. O'Croly's *Inquiry into the Principal Points of Difference, Real or Imaginary, Between the two Churches with a view to Religious Harmony or Forbearance*, London: Fellowes, 1835, p. 36.

² Cf. Gore's *Roman Catholic Claims*, sixth edition, p. 185, etc.

Creed) mysteries more exalted with regard to Jesus are proposed to the faithful, as objects of their belief and contemplation—that he is the Son of God, and true God, as is the Father who begot him from Eternity. We also confess that he is the second person of the Blessed Trinity, equal in all things to the Father and the Holy Ghost; for, in the divine Persons nothing unequal or unlike should exist, or even be imagined to exist, whereas we acknowledge the essence, will and power of all to be one; a truth clearly revealed in many of the oracles of inspiration, and sublimely announced in this testimony of St John, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God’ (John i. 1). . . . On this point, then, we are to believe that the Son is of the same nature, of the same power and wisdom with the Father; as we more fully profess in these words of the Nicene Creed, ‘And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, born of the Father before all ages, God of God, true God of true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made.’”¹

In the third place, the two systems agree in assigning *extraordinary intrinsic efficacy to the death of Jesus Christ*. We may perhaps deplore the realism bordering on vulgarity by which the death of Jesus Christ is impressed upon the imagination of Roman Catholic worshippers, yet there can be no doubt about the tremendous emphasis with which the death for our redemption is asserted. In the expiatory efficacy of Christ’s death the Church of Rome thoroughly believes; and even when she overlays it with the sacrifice of the mass, she tries to make the mass identical with the sacrifice once for all on Calvary. Thus the authors of the Catechism declare, “We, therefore, confess that the sacrifice

¹ *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, translated into English by the Rev. J. Donovan, Professor Royal College, Maynooth: Dublin, 1829, pp. 33, 4.

of the mass is one and the same sacrifice with that of the Cross; the victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus, who offered himself, once only, a bloody sacrifice on the altar of the Cross. The bloody and unbloody victim is still one and the same, and the oblation of the Cross is daily renewed in the eucharistic sacrifice, in obedience to the command of our Lord, 'This do, for a commemoration of me' (Luke xxii. 19, 1 Cor. xi. 24)."¹ The Council of Trent moreover pronounces an anathema on any "who should assert that the sacrifice of the Mass is in any way derogatory to the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross."² It will thus appear that the Church of Rome desires to lay what emphasis she can upon the death of Jesus on the Cross as the great propitiation. Evangelical Protestants regard this expiation on the Cross as the very centre and citadel of the gospel, and we thankfully recognise the same truth as held in her own fashion by the Church of Rome. In the fourth place, the two systems agree regarding the *personality, procession, and agency of the Holy Ghost*. This is implied in what has already been said about the Trinity; but it will be well to point out how strictly orthodox the Church of Rome is regarding the Holy Spirit. "Unable," say the authors of the Catechism, "to express the emanation of the third Person by a proper, we have recourse to the common, name of Holy Ghost; a name, however, peculiarly appropriate to him who infuses into us spiritual life, and without whose holy inspiration we can do nothing meritorious of eternal life."³ On the procession of the Holy Ghost, therefore, from both the Father and the Son the Church of Rome is clear and emphatic, maintaining the *filioque* clause in opposition to the Eastern Church. The great Agent in

¹ Donovan's Translation, *ut supra*, p. 249.

² Cf. *Trid. Synod*, Sess. xxii., Can. iv.

³ Cf. The whole passage, pp. 84-87.

spiritual things is thus honoured by both Romanists and Protestants; we alike live in fear of offending and quenching the Spirit through whose gracious operations we hope to be saved. We might mention other points of agreement such as the views entertained about Original Sin, about Heaven, and about Hell. In all these subjects there is something in the Roman doctrine which evangelical Protestants can endorse. But it is time we were turning to the other side of the subject and showing the additions and developments which Rome has furnished to the faith, which have no warrant in Scripture and which justify the Reformation.

§ 2. *The Church of Rome has added the Apocrypha and Tradition to the Scriptural Rule of Faith*

We have already seen how the Pope has recently pledged his Church to the most extreme and mechanical view of inspiration. Yet this is quite compatible with a belief in the insufficiency of Holy Scripture as the rule of faith. The idea is that Christianity had at first to be communicated orally; and that the apostles' oral statements have come down by tradition in the Church as a supplement to what the apostles and their companions were prompted to write. The Church is thus committed to an unwritten as well as to a written word. Thus the Council of Trent receives "with sentiments of equal piety and reverence all the Books, as well of the Old as of the New Testament, since one God was the author of them both, and also the traditions relating as well to faith as to morals, inasmuch as coming either from the mouth of Christ Himself, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, they have been preserved in the Catholic Church, in uninterrupted succession."¹ Now the fact of

¹ Cf. *Canones et Decreta S. O. Concilii Tridentini*, sess. iv. Dec. de Can. Scripturis.

the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, which were never accepted by the Jews themselves, being thrown into the same category with the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, shows that no proper consideration was given to the subject. And when to this is added the enormous mass of unwritten tradition out of which new articles of faith at any time may be sprung upon the world, we can easily see that men are thus at the mercy of the caprice of the Church. Now Protestantism was a noble revolt against this ecclesiastical caprice. Its key-note was "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). It recognised the Divine voice in the written Word; it failed to recognise it in the additions and developments which the Church capriciously made to the faith.

§ 3. *The Church of Rome by her doctrine of Transubstantiation has transformed the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper into a miracle which outrages common sense*

We pass from the extraordinary rule of faith furnished by the Church of Rome, to the still more extraordinary sacrament. The sacrifice of the mass, as affirmed by the Church of Rome, constitutes its most characteristic rite, and practically sets up a new religion. In his preface to Hutton's book on *The Anglican Ministry*, the late Cardinal Newman says "Catholics and the Ritualists hold that in the Holy Eucharist, the Gospel priest offers Christ in His Body and Blood for the living and the dead, and that, by virtue of such offering, he is a priest. . . Whence," he continues, "did Ritualists get so marvellous a gift? Did Episcopacy include it? Then must Anglican ordainers have intended to communicate it. Is it included in the form of ordination? Then, where are the words which

declare it? Surely, it is too momentous, too awful a gift, to be transmitted in silence. It constitutes a new religion. It is the formal cause, the constituting rite of the Catholic Church; where it is not, there is no Church.”¹ It is evident from language like this that upon the miracle of Transubstantiation the whole efficacy of Romanism is made to turn. And yet there is no scriptural authority for such an idea. The fact that Jesus was present in bodily person at the first Supper must have made it impossible for the disciples to have taken literally His words—“This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me” (Luke xxii. 19). They could not have imagined Jesus meant that the bread had become His body. Moreover, the alleged miracle, unlike the miracles of the gospel, does not appeal to our sense-perception. As far as our senses are concerned, no change is cognisable in the consecrated wafer. If we are to believe that our senses deceive us, then the whole world of reality is undermined and our outlook is reduced again to chaos. And all this figment is conjured up to make the world believe that the Church of Rome has still miraculous power, and can bring Christ in His Body and Blood down to her altars. The Transubstantiation theory is an outrage upon commonsense.

§ 4. *The Church of Rome has added to the two Sacraments instituted by Christ five others in hope of consecrating more thoroughly human life and its relations*

We need not stop at this stage to particularise the doctrine of the Sacraments, by which the mere outward act, the *opus operatum* as it is called, is regarded as necessarily efficacious. Of this we shall have to speak later on. We merely wish here to enumerate the supplementary sacraments which the Church of Rome has supplied. These

¹ P. xiii.

are Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony. For none of these can any Scripture authority be claimed. CONFIRMATION is, indeed, practised by some Protestants, but it is only as a Church institution, not as a sacrament instituted by Christ. For PENANCE as a sacrament there is no Scriptural authority. The passages about remitting sin do not bear the interpretation put upon them, as we shall show farther on, and the setting up of a judgment-seat in the Church of God is for many reasons to be deprecated. EXTREME UNCTION can hardly plead the passages (Mark vi. 13 ; James v. 14) in its favour which speak of anointing the sick that they may be healed, and not the dying that they may be helped on their journey. ORDERS, again, as a sacrament, has no scriptural warrant. Ministers were ordained by the apostles by the laying on of hands ; in this way men, found to be fit, were recognised publicly as officers of the Church. But there was nothing sacramental in the ceremony. And as for MATRIMONY, the Church which insists on the celibacy of the clergy and the holiness of virginity makes curious amends to married life by exalting into a sacrament what is forbidden to others, and insisting on thereby consecrating the worldly life. We shall notice farther on how the Protestant spirit consecrates everything, and, consequently, has no need to multiply sacraments, as if our Lord Jesus could not order what is sufficient.

§ 5. *The Church of Rome has added to the worship of God the worship of dead saints, and more especially of the Virgin*

The Communion of Saints is supposed to imply such commerce with the dead and saintly as will secure their intercession. Argument is actually built upon St Paul's petition for the prayers of living believers to the still more reasonable, as it is represented, petition for the prayers of

the dead.¹ But a Church which, as we shall see, wages war against assurance of faith, and so is never sure of living saints, naturally makes as much as she can of dead ones. She thinks herself safe in canonising the dead; and imagines that prayer addressed to dead saints secures the communion which all the saints should enjoy. More particularly is Mary, the mother of our Lord, singled out for worship, and the dogmas of her immaculate conception, and of the assumption of her body into heaven, and of her influence there as "Queen of heaven," tend to make of her a very serious rival in this matter of affection and of worship to her Divine Son. Now for all this worship of the dead there is not a shred of scriptural authority. The honour and mediatorship of Christ are hereby invaded or set aside; and a fictitious intercourse with the dead set up, for which no reputed signs or miracles can supply any justification.

§ 6. *The Church of Rome has added Purgatory to the terrors of the world to come, and proposed to deliver her devotees, on certain conditions, from its pains*

Having proposed new relations with the saints in heaven through worship, the Church of Rome balances this by proposing new relations with the departed who have not reached the saintly state. Not being sure of any saint, as we have seen, on earth, the Church regards the departed as needing purification before being fitted for celestial blessedness; and this purification is brought about by fiery torment in a place called Purgatory. But the faithful on earth may by masses and intercessions hasten the release of the tormented souls, and much power over Purgatory is assumed by the Church.² Now, for all this there is absolutely no

¹ Cf. Donovan's *Catechism*, *ut supra*, p. 357.

² *Canones et Decreta Concil. Tridentini*, sess. xxv.; Donovan's *Catechism*, p. 59; Creed of Pius IV., § vi.

scriptural warrant; and the possibility of purgatorial fires has been conjured up to profit by men's fears. The revelation made by Christ of the world to come cannot be made to tally with this new doctrine of Rome.

§ 7. *The Church of Rome has altogether falsified the way of Salvation by anathematising those who believe in Justification by Faith alone and by insisting on good works having a share in securing it*

In the Canons of Trent justification by faith alone is expressly placed under anathema. The merit of Christ is allowed to take away original sin in the baptized; but afterwards the baptized person will be expected to merit increase of justification by good works; and to release himself by penance from mortal sin; and from venial sin by indulgences, satisfaction and good works; the residue of sin being got rid of, in all probability, in purgatory.¹ Now it must be admitted that the Church incurred a fearful responsibility in making the salvation of men a matter of human effort instead of a matter of free grace. For the cumbrous plan no Scripture warrant can be produced. The merit of Jesus is minimised that the merit of man may be set up. No wonder that Protestantism made so much of justification by faith. As we shall see, it is indeed the article of a standing or falling Church; and it requires to be proclaimed on the housetops once again.

§ 8. *The Church of Rome has made an Episcopate, which had no existence in apostolic times, the dictators in the Kingdom of God*

It is admitted by the best scholars that "bishops" and "presbyters" were identical in apostolic times, and that

¹ *Canones et Decreta, ut supra*, sess. vi.; Donovan's *Catechism*, pp. 108-112.

the distinction afterwards drawn between them was due to development. "It is a fact now generally recognised by theologians of all shades of opinion," says the late Bishop Lightfoot, "that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the Church is called indifferently 'bishop' (ἐπίσκοπος) and 'elder' or 'presbyter' (πρεσβύτερος)." "If bishop was at first used as a synonym for presbyter and afterwards came to designate the higher officer under whom the presbyters served, the episcopate properly so-called would seem to have been developed from the subordinate office. In other words, the episcopate was formed not out of the apostolic order by localisation, but out of the presbyterial by elevation; and the title, which originally was common to all, came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them."¹ It is well to add that the "divine right of Episcopacy" was never insisted upon until the time of Archbishop Laud. "The English reformers," says Lathbury in his *History of the English Episcopacy*, "did not contend for any system of government or discipline in the Church, as being *jure Divino*; things indifferent, as ceremonies and the clerical habits, were left to the civil magistrates. Nor did they refuse to recognise the validity or ordination in those foreign Churches that had renounced episcopacy."² "Laud's notions on the subject of Church government," he continues further on, "were at variance with those adopted by many of his predecessors, who, until the time of Bancroft, never claimed a divine right for the government of the English Church; and even Bancroft admitted the validity of presbyterian ordination; for when it was suggested in 1610 that the Scotch bishops-elect should be ordained presbyters, he opposed on

¹ Cf. Bishop Lightfoot on *Philippians*, Second Edition, London, 1869, p. 93. 194.

² Pp. 19, 20.

the ground that ordination by presbyters was valid. As the presbyterians advanced the claim of divine right with so much arrogance, the episcopalians assumed a new position and defended their own platform on the same ground. The divine right of presbytery was pleaded by the Scots with a dogmatism almost ridiculous. 'To balance their declarations Laud recommended Bishop Hall to write on the divine right of Episcopacy.'"¹ Assuming then that "bishops" were developed from "presbyters," and that they do not belong to the *esse* of the Church, however some may regard them as belonging to the *bene esse* of it, we have now to notice how the office was seized by the Church of Rome and made an instrument of tyranny in the Church. As the Church developed, local, general, and œcumenical councils were from time to time summoned; but they soon settled down into purely episcopal assemblies. The people and the inferior clergy might be present, but the bishops ultimately settled everything. "Although presbyters and deacons," says Isaac Taylor, "attended those occasional synods that were convened by bishops in their particular dioceses, it was the bishops only who met their metropolitan in the stated vernal and autumnal conventions; and the bishops only who were summoned to œcumenic councils."² We are consequently prepared for the fact that in such a council as that of Trent, or the more recent one at the Vatican, none but bishops were allowed to vote. The hierarchy in fact absorbs all authority in the Church of Rome. They meet in sacred conclave and arrange everything. The Pope is umpire with a right of veto; but the Christian people are handed over to the management of the bishops.

¹ P. 170.

² Cf. Isaac Taylor's *Spiritual Despotism*, London, 1835, p. 208; see also p. 454.

When consequently we read in St Peter's First Epistle his exhortation to his fellow-presbyters not to be "lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock" (1 Peter v. 3, R.V.), and the Douay Version is still more emphatic, "neither as lording it over the clergy"; we can only stand in amazement at the spiritual despotism which has been substituted for the primitive simplicity. The Church of Rome, though prudently abstaining from defining "the Church," might very properly assert that the episcopate is the Church, since the bishops regulate everything regarding it.

§ 9. *The Church of Rome has reached her culmination in proclaiming not only her own infallibility but also that of the Pope*

The Spiritual Despotism exercised by the episcopate has its natural culmination in the infallibility of the Pope. Nothing is so infectious as infallibility. Give individuals unlimited authority, and they will soon pose as infallibilities. We may discern the germs of infallibility in children; we see them developed in adults whenever they can exercise absolute authority, and the Papal infallibility is simply the summit and crown of the great delusion. We may notice that there is in Scripture no promise of infallibility to the Church. What Christ promised was the Holy Spirit to guide the disciples into all the truth, as we have already seen (John xvi. 13). He promised also that the gates of hell would not be allowed to prevail against the Church (Matt. xvi. 18). But this did not, as a matter of fact, prevent the rise of heresies, and the falling away of multitudes (1 Cor. xi. 19; Luke xviii. 8). Instead of an infallible Guide, therefore, in the person of either Church or Pope, there has been given a Holy Spirit whose promptings, alas, are not always obeyed, who is often grieved, who may

be quenched; yet whose guidance of the Church generally shall be so successful as to prevent her ever being overcome by her enemies. Such an arrangement is surely wiser than that of a pretended infallible Guide who can be shown to have "hesitated" and to have "blundered," and whose encyclicals are usually out-of-date documents, of no earthly use to anybody, and utterly powerless to prevent the progress of mankind.¹

We have thus found in the Church of Rome the most serious corruption of apostolic truth. Leaving the safe "rule of faith" in Holy Scripture, she has burdened mankind with her own traditions. Imagining she was under the direction of the Spirit, she has not hesitated to take up anti-scriptural positions. She has falsified the way of salvation, substituting a cumbrous and self-righteous plan for the divine simplicity which, as we shall see, is by grace alone. The question we have now to determine is, Should union with such an unfaithful Church be thought of? It will not, we think, be difficult to show that Reunion with Rome upon the terms she proposes is impossible, and to this we shall proceed in the next chapter.

¹ Dr Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church*. Lect. xii., "The Hesitations of the Infallible Guide"; Lect. xiv., "The Blunders of the Infallible Guide."

CHAPTER III

REUNION WITH ROME ON HER TERMS IMPOSSIBLE

§ 1. *The Reunion of the Churches a legitimate and splendid hope*

No one can read our Lord's longings after union, as brought before us in His intercessory prayer, without being infected by them. He intercedes earnestly for His disciples, and all who should believe on Him through their word, "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John xvii. 21). The world can only be convinced of the divinity of Christ's mission through the union of His disciples. And when we cast our eyes over the state of Christendom, divided among rival Churches, we may well wonder when the day shall dawn when "the envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isa. xi. 13). It would be a glorious consummation if the Eastern Church with its 75,000,000, and the Roman Catholic Church with its 180,000,000, and the Protestant Churches with 120,000,000, could unite into one great Christendom, and present to the heathen majority a perfectly united front. This is a problem which may well occupy earnest and ardent minds; and the more calmly and thoroughly it is considered, the better for the Churches and for the world. That the Churches may be expected to unite at some future

day is surely a reasonable hope; and it is the duty of every believer in Jesus to do what in him lies to help on the great consummation.

§ 2. "*Reunion with Rome*" may be altogether a mistake in present circumstances

It is very easy, however, to make a mistake in a problem such as that now before us. A united Christendom is, as we have admitted, a grand idea. And it is a great temptation to include a Church numerically so strong as the Church of Rome, and so pretentious. Especially will the temptation prove well-nigh resistless if we have been led to entertain current notions about the transmission of ministerial orders. Those who believe that "the grace of orders" is transmitted through the imposition of Episcopal hands, will deem it absolutely necessary to include the great Church through which, on their theory, "the grace of orders" came.

But may not union with the Church of Rome be altogether over-estimated? Have not some made the journey and returned to tell us that absorption in the great Church did not secure the peace and joy they had expected?¹ The solution of the problem of Christian Union will not, in all likelihood, begin with Rome at all. "God's ways," in such a matter, are "not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts." The plan which seems easiest and speediest, a wholesale instead of a retail method, may turn out to be "the long way round." Reunion with Rome, we must remember, is offered on one condition, and this is of absolute submission to the Roman Pontiff. Posing as an infallibility, he cannot now abate a single claim. The hope entertained by such a peacemaker as Dr Pusey that Roman explanations would enable many to accept of the Decrees of the Council of

¹ Cf. *Reasons for Returning to the Church of England*, London, 1871; also *To Rome and Back*, by One who has made the Journey.

Trent, has proved delusive.¹ "The attribute of *infallibility* claimed by the Church of Rome," wrote the late Bishop Butcher, "would forbid her, even if she felt inclined that way, to make any changes in the infallible dicta of the Council of Trent, or to abandon any portions of doctrine which she has for centuries tenaciously clung to, and which all the world knows that she professes. Any concessions, retractions, or changes must, then, come from us."² The late Cardinal Manning was most explicit on the subject:—"The Church is definite, precise, and peremptory in its declarations of doctrine. It refuses all compromise, transaction, or confusion of the terms and limits of its definitions. It is intolerant not only of contradiction, but of deviation. It excludes every formula but its own."³ Such conditions might be tolerated if behind them there was an immaculate and infallible history, and a pure, undefiled development. But we have already seen that the Church of Rome has departed sadly from apostolic faith and practice. She has very largely rendered the pure Word of God of none effect through her traditions. Her history before the Reformation was infamous. Her pontiffs were, in not a few instances, dissolute pagans. If ever men were justified in revolt against a polluting and intolerable tyranny, it was the Reformers.

§ 3. *The Reformers made every effort to remain in the Church of Rome, short of disloyalty to morality and to truth*

The history of the Reformation, from the first movement of Luther down to the assembling of the Council of

¹ *An Eirenicon* by the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D., 1865.

² Cf. Dr Butcher's *Reunion with Rome as advocated in the Eirenicon* of Dr Pusey, Dublin, 1866, pp. 63, 4.

³ *The Reunion of Christendom*, p. 19.

Trent, goes to show that the Reformers made every effort to reach an understanding with Rome. Here are Luther's words addressed to Cardinal Cajetan when entering upon the Conference at Augsburg in 1518:—"First of all I, Brother Martin Luther the Augustinian, protest that I revere and follow the Holy Roman Church in all my words and deeds, present, past, and future. If anything otherwise has been said, I wish it unsaid. . . . I protest that I am not conscious of having said anything contrary to Holy Scripture, the Church Fathers, the papal decrees, or right reason, but that all that I have said seems to me to-day to be sound, true, and catholic. Nevertheless, as I am not infallible, I have submitted myself, and also now submit myself to the judgment and determination of the lawful and Holy Church, and to all of better mind. Besides, I offer either here or elsewhere to present publicly a reason for my statements. But if this be not agreeable to your reverence, I am ready either to respond in writing to the objections urged and to hear the judgment and decision of the doctors of the renowned Imperial Universities of Basel, Freiburg, Louvain; or, if they be not enough, of Paris also, the parent of studies, and from antiquity even the most Christian university, and that in which theology has been particularly cultivated."¹ This appeal was received by the Cardinal with the simple cry "Recant." The Church, which had excommunicated him without trying to comprehend his case, has nothing to say to the soul in his difficulties but "Recant." And all through the years of trial until the Council of Trent met shortly before Luther's death, the Reformers asked earnestly for a free General Council to whose decisions they were ready to submit. When at last after long delay a Council was summoned, it

¹ *Opera Var. Arg.*, the Erlangen Edition of Luther's Latin Works pertaining to the history of the Reformation, ii. 37 sq.

was found that it was *not* free, but at the beck and call of the Pope, and that, so far from desiring to conciliate the reformers, the Council had met to promulgate the errors and abuses against which the reformers protested, and to anathematize everybody who would not submit. It was, therefore, when the Reformers found that no reformation of the Church was to be expected from the authorities at Rome that they acquiesced in their excommunication and established Reformed Churches. There was nothing schismatic in their conduct. They had been hunted out of the Roman Communion as heretics without their case being properly considered, and they had no alternative but to set up a rival system and abide by the verdict of history. "See here," says M. Claude in his excellent *Defence of the Reformation*, "after what manner things went at Trent, and by what degrees they tended to make an entire breach of communion between the Roman and Reformed party. Let any now judge, if in all this conduct, our fathers had not just and lawful causes for a separation. 1. They saw in the contrary party an invincible resolution to defend and preserve the errors and superstitions of which they demanded the correction. 2. They saw that resolution go so high, as to constrain them to fall back again into those errors against all their knowledge, and the motions of their own consciences. 3. They saw that this violence which they offered to them had no bounds; for it went not only as far as disputes, not only so far as the ordinances and decrees, but even to excommunications and anathemas, that is to say, to a separation and schism with a curse. 4. They saw that they joined to all this punishments, not in one or two places, but in all; not by popular heat, but in cold blood, and in the usual ways designed for the punishment of the greatest villains. 5. They saw that those punishments came from the perpetual

and general inspiration of the Court of Rome, which did not cease persecuting them in all places; and which proceeded so far as to search for them in their most hidden retreats. 6. They saw that they refused the most equitable and necessary conditions without which they could not proceed to a just examination of religion, nor to a holy and Christian reformation, and that instead of that, the Court of Rome would always remain sole mistress and arbitress. Lastly, they saw that instead of returning to the purity of Christianity, by taking away out of the field of the Church so many corruptions that defaced it, so many false opinions that destroyed it, so many kinds of worship contrary to true piety that dishonoured it, and destroyed the salvation of souls, these prelates on the contrary would establish things that custom only, and the tradition of some ages had for the most part introduced; that they would establish them, I say, for the future in force of a law, to be incorporated into their religion as essential and indispensable parts of it, to which they would subject the minds and consciences of men, of which they ordained the practice and belief, under penalties of anathema; cutting off and separating from the body of their society all those who should hold a contrary opinion and practice. Let any judge whether our fathers could after that still preserve Church Communion with a party in which they could see no reflection either of the spirit of truth, or Christian purity and charity; and whether, all hope being taken away of ever reducing them to the right way of the Gospel, or even of being able to live with them without wounding their conscience by a detestable hypocrisy, in pretending to believe that which they did not believe, and to practise a worship which they held unlawful, there not remaining any further means for them to abide in that communion without partaking of their errors, without exposing their children,

and without rendering themselves culpable before God ; let any, I say, judge whether they did not do well to separate themselves. I confess that when a man is joined with others in one and the same body, he ought not lightly to proceed to a rupture ; there are measures and behaviour to be observed that prudence and Christian charity require of us ; and as long as we have any hope of procuring the amendment and healing of our brethren, or where there is at least any way for us to bewail and to mourn for their sins, without losing our own innocency, and their constraining us to partake in their crimes, we ought not to forsake them. But when that hope is lost, and when that means of preserving our own purity is taken from us, when instead of being able to bring them back, we see, on the contrary, that their communion does but make us to cast ourselves into an unavoidable danger of corrupting ourselves, it is certain that we ought to withdraw from them, lest in partaking with their sins, we should draw the just condemnation of God upon ourselves. ‘ Be not partaker with other men’s sins,’ says St Paul (1 Tim. v. 22), ‘ but keep thyself pure.’¹

§ 4. *The new dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope renders Reunion with Rome altogether impossible*

One would fancy that when the fallibility of the Pope has been historically demonstrated, and when the blunders and folly of the papal policy have been pointed out, there would be some amendment of the papal claim, and some desire to meet other Churches half-way. Surely some concession will be granted, seeing that the Pope’s title has been discredited. The curious fact is, that instead of conceding

¹ Cf. *A Defence of the Reformation*, by the Reverend and Learned Monsieur Claude, Minister of the Reformed Church at Charenton, and faithfully translated into English by T. B., M.A., London, 1815, vol. ii. pp. 96-98.

anything, the Pope, under the advice of the Jesuits, demands more than ever, and, though he has shown himself in the former estates of the Church unequal to the government of a province, stands ready at a moment's notice to undertake the government of a world. The Jesuits, as is well known, arranged for the Vatican Council and the proclamation at it of the Pope's infallibility to make reunion impossible. Of this party the late Dr Döllinger has said, "That no stone will be left unturned by that party to hinder every approximation, and strangle at its birth every idea of peace, is certain. The Vatican Council was organized for the express purpose of making all plans of reunion for ever impossible. Individual conversions, indeed, are gladly welcomed; they are drops at once absorbed and lost in the ocean of Roman uniformity. But there is to be no negotiation on a larger scale, for bodies of men meeting on equal terms. Some years ago," he continues, "a society was formed in England of Anglicans and Catholics combined for the common furtherance of the union of the Christian Churches, and it was condemned by the Pope, at the instance of Archbishop Manning."¹

§ 5. *The Pope's Encyclical on Unity, and his Judgment upon Anglican Orders should convince all candid minds of the utter impracticability of Reunion with Rome*

The encyclical on Unity, "Satis Cognitum," 1896, should convince everybody how hopeless reunion with Rome is. Canon Gore has pointed out the assumption it contains that "only a despotic monarch can secure to any society unity and strength." He has also pointed out its unhistoric assertions, that "the consent of antiquity ever acknowledged

¹ Cf. Dr Döllinger's *Lectures on the Reunion of the Churches*, translated by Oxenham, London, 1872, p. 160; also, *The Pope and the Council*, by Janus, *passim*, London, 1869, and Dr Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church*, *ut supra*.

without the slightest doubt or hesitation the bishops of Rome, and revered them as the legitimate successors of St Peter." The arrogant way also in which the Pope has disposed of the question of the validity of the Anglican orders ought to convince the most ardent that there can be nothing but unconditional submission to the Roman claim and absorption in the Roman Church for any who have turned their face towards Rome.¹ Why in face of such facts should any candid mind still imagine that in our plans for reunion the Church of Rome ought to be included? Why include a Church which has deliberately committed herself to a policy of absorption, and rejected the idea of reunion? We are not surely bound to believe history fallacious for the sake of union with those who falsify its facts. Absolute surrender and absorption in the Church of Rome imply a renunciation of truth and manhood for which, we must believe, Protestantism will never be prepared. The only legitimate effect of the policy of the Jesuits is to provoke a union against Rome.

§ 6. *The only union feasible at present is that of the Reformed Churches against the Church of Rome*

Our purpose in mentioning the "historic Episcopate" in last chapter as a development, rather than an institution with a scriptural and divine right, was to prepare the way for a closer union on the part of the Reformed Churches. Why should it be insisted upon now, as if it were more than a development, seeing that the greatest of the English divines never dreamed of doing so? The non-Episcopal Churches will not be forced to acknowledge the Episcopate, and to seek new orders by the policy which is now pursued, seeing that they have scholarship and history down to the time of Laud on their side. It would be wiser surely, in-

¹ Cf. Gore's *Roman Catholic Claims*, Sixth Edition, pp. 196-202.

stead of looking in the direction of Rome, for the Anglicans to look towards their Protestant brethren, who will not be moved from their position by the arrogance of the Roman curia and of those who are enamoured of the Roman pretensions. A *modus vivendi* can easily be found among the Reformed Churches. Episcopacy may suit certain circumstances better than Presbytery or Independency. But who contend for the divine right of politics when doctrinal truth, as we shall see later on, is in question, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is being smothered by superstition? What we need is to get back to apostolic faith and, as far as possible, apostolic practice. Development so far as it has been worldly and capricious, and in Rome's case it has undoubtedly been so, must be reversed, and apostolic ideas revived. It was this the Reformers tried to do. They did not perhaps succeed as thoroughly as we, after three centuries of additional investigation, may now do, in appreciating the apostolic church and its position: but they were right in the main. The Apostles' Creed, which Calvin made the basis of his *Institutes*, may not be so ancient a symbol as the Reformers perhaps supposed. But it will be on some such simple basis that the Union of Christendom will ultimately rest. Protestants will not allow themselves to be committed to "developments" which have had no divine guarantees, discernible at all events to the naked eye. Union will come through an increasing sense of brotherhood and submission to Christ alone! Meanwhile the movements in the various Reformed Churches toward closer union are to be encouraged and cultivated. Pan-Anglican Councils, Pan-Presbyterian Councils, Methodist Conferences, Congresses of the Free Churches, these are all hopeful movements, the earnest of better times. And if anyone will ask, Is the great Church of Rome to be left out in the cold? we can only answer that so long as she pre-

ends to be what she is not, an infallible Church and a doctrinally pure Church, she deserves to be left alone in her glory or in her shame. But the moment she acknowledges her fallibility, her cruel mistakes, her errors, and her self-will, and takes up a penitent position which should be the position of every Church, and shows herself prepared to make concessions for the sake of union, she may hope for a place in the sisterhood of the Christian Churches, but not all then.

CHAPTER IV

THE REAL HARMONY OF THE PROTESTANT CONFESSIONS

§ 1. *It is useless to Propose a Union of Protestants on a basis of Doctrinal Indifference*

WE have seen in last chapter the danger of over-estimating the value of a great visible Church in a proposed Reunion of Churches. The Church of Rome has no real desire for Union; her one unqualified demand is Supremacy. The Reformed Churches have, as we have seen, no alternative but to unite against her. Her claims are so monstrous and so unsound that only unclear thinkers could dream of surrender. The question we have next to consider is how may a union of Protestants be best promoted. And here it will be well to dispose of a solution which has been recently proposed, that the English Church should be the nucleus round which the Protestantism of the world should gather. This is urged on the ground of its comprehensiveness. "The English Church," it has been said, "whatever its practice may be, is so organised that, if its laws and formularies were lived up to, Christianity in all its purity and simplicity would be at least permissible without exposure to the pains and penalties of heresy. By reason of this fundamental breadth, she covers, includes, and permits every form of Protestant opinion and thought, ranging from the ritualist or externalist at one extreme, whose ideas savour somewhat of Rome, to the Unitarian at the other extreme. This is her sole title to Catholicity. She has in her communion these various schools of thought."¹

¹ Cf. *Protestantism, a Study in the direction of Religious Truth and Christian Unity*, by Edward P. Usher, A.M., LL.B., London: Gay & Bird, 1896, p. 7.

Accordingly this clever author proceeds to urge a union of Protestants on what we would call "Broad Church" lines, quoting such men as Dean Stanley, Professor Jowett, and Bishop Hampden in favour of subordinating doctrine to comprehensiveness. The following quotation from Dean Stanley will suffice to show the writer's standpoint and solution: "The educated world of Christendom has formed a unity for itself above and beside and without the external unity or divisions of the Churches, in which those who wish can approach each other without even touching on the barriers which politically and ecclesiastically part them asunder. A French or German Catholic, like Tocqueville or Rémusat or Döllinger, has far more in common with men like Hallam or Macaulay or Tennyson or Milman than he has with the partisans of the Court of Rome. A Presbyterian like Chalmers, a Unitarian like James Martineau, has far more in common with Coleridge or Arnold or Keble than he has with many divines nominally of his own communion. And the higher we ascend in the intellectual scale, the more we find the atmosphere to be one of attraction and not of repulsion. The theology of Lord Bacon and of Bishop Butler and of Pascal can be used by Christians of every Church almost equally. The great work of Ewald, wherever known, commands the respect of all but the extremest Protestants and of all but the extremest Roman Catholics."¹ Now the sacrifice of doctrinal accuracy to ecclesiastical comprehensiveness is, we believe, a short-sighted and suicidal policy. The human mind is so constituted that it could not rest in *doctrinal indifference*! Besides, no fact is more significant surely than the loss of influence in recent years of what was once a powerful "Broad Church party." The aggressive character of the "High Church party," contending for what they call

¹ Pp. 104, 5.

"Catholic truth," is sufficient to show that no union of Protestants need be proposed on any basis of doctrinal indifference. Doctrines must be "threshed out," the intellectual part of our nature must be satisfied, before we can settle down into unity and peace.

§ 2. *The Reformers were intensely interested in this question of Protestant Union*

It should be remembered that in 1552, at the very time when the Council of Trent was forging its anathemas, Archbishop Cranmer invited Melanchthon, Bullinger, Bucer, and Calvin to a conference in London, for the purpose of framing a basis of evangelical union. To this invitation Calvin replied that for such an object he would willingly cross ten seas, and that no labour or pain should be spared to remove, by a scriptural consensus, the distractions among Christians which he deplored as one of the greatest evils. "In this noble sentiment," says Dr Schaff, "Calvin expressed the true genius of the Reformed Church, which has always been in favour of union on the basis of truth." He proceeds to picture what such a conference would have been :—"Cranmer, the moderate and cautious reformer and martyr of the Church of England, the chief framer of its Liturgy and Articles of Religion; Melanchthon, 'the preceptor of Germany,' the gentle companion of the heroic Luther, the author of the Augsburg Confession, and the surviving patriarch of the German Reformation; Bullinger, the friend and successor of Zwingli, the teacher and benefactor of the Marian exiles, and the author of the most oecumenical among the Reformed Confessions; Bucer, the indefatigable, though unsuccessful, peacemaker between the Lutherans and Zwinglians, and the mediator between the Anglican and the Continental Reformation; Calvin, the master-theologian, commentator, legislator, and disciplinarian, who was then just in the prime of his power, and

(in the language of John Knox) at the head of 'the most flourishing school of Christ since the days of the apostles'—these representative men, assembled in Lambeth Palace or the Jerusalem Chamber, would have filled an important chapter in Church history, and challenged the assent of the Reformed Churches for a common confession of faith that embodied their learning, wisdom, and experience."¹ Political events, however, frustrated the projected meeting. Yet a harmony has been reached in the long series of Protestant Confessions which no candid student of history can afford to overlook. The harmony will appear all the more remarkable in that it has not been designed. Each Church delivered its testimony according to the circumstances which called the confession forth, and the undesigned harmony goes to show the essential unity of Protestantism.

§ 3. *The Harmony of the Protestant Confessions was exhibited with great faithfulness as early as 1581 in a work prepared by Beza and coadjutors under the direction of the people of Zurich and of Geneva*

At an assembly in Frankfort in 1577, the idea was discussed of having a common Confession composed for all Protestants; but difficulties were soon discerned as then insurmountable. As the next best thing it was eventually suggested that a Harmony might very properly be drawn up, in which the words of each Confession would be faithfully preserved, and their wonderful unity brought out. The work was ultimately entrusted to Beza, Daneau, and Salnar (otherwise named Salnard, or Salvart, minister of the Church of Castres), and the last of these was the chief compiler of the Harmony. It was published in 1581 in Latin at Geneva in quarto, but has been more than once published in English. The last edition was published in

¹ Cf. Schaff's *Christ and Christianity*, *ut supra*, pp. 153-4.

London in 1842, revised and considerably enlarged by the Rev. Peter Hall, M.A., Rector of Milston, Wilts. It is the very best exposure we could desire of the exaggerations of Bossuet in his *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*, although originally written long before this attack. Indeed Bishop Hall in his *Peace of Rome*, published originally in 1609; and Edgar in his *Variations of Popery*, have shown that there have been more variations within the Roman Communion than have existed outside, and that the boasted unity is mechanical rather than doctrinal and moral. It will be useful to point out briefly wherein the Harmony of the Protestant Confessions may be found. The Confessions which have been exhibited as in harmony are the following:—(1) The Confession of Augsburg in 1530; (2) the Confession of Sueveland, presented in the same year, 1530, to the Emperor by the ambassadors of Strasburg, Constance, Meiningen and Linden; (3) the Confession of Basle in 1532, revised in 1561; (4) the Confession of Helvetia in 1536, accepted at Smalcald; (5) the Confession of Saxony, written by Melancthon in 1551, in hope of its being considered at the Council of Trent; (6) the Confession of Wirtemberg in 1552; (7) the Confession of France in 1561; (8) the Confession of England, written in 1562 by Bishop Jewell; (9) the Latter Confession of Helvetia in 1566; (10) the Confession of Belgia in 1566; (11) the Confession of Bohemia in 1573; (12) the Confession of Scotland in 1560 and ratified in 1567, and subscribed by the king in 1581. In his appendix, Mr Hall adds *in extenso*:—(1) The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; (2) the Nineteen Articles of the Church of Ireland, in which are embraced the Nine Lambeth Articles; (3) the judgment of the Synod of Dort concerning the Five Disputed Points; and (4) the Westminster Con-

fession of Faith. It will thus be seen that a sufficiently wide basis is laid down upon which to erect Protestant Harmony.

§ 4. *Summary of the Protestant Position as set forth in the Confessions*

And here we have to notice—(1) The acceptance by all these Confessions of *Holy Scripture as the ultimate rule of faith*. This is a fundamental principle of Protestantism. The Lutheran Church and the Anglican Church may in practice allow tradition and the fathers and councils a greater authority and influence than the other Churches have done; yet they are committed by their Confessions to the same principle of Holy Scripture being the ultimate rule of faith. As it is well put in the *Latter Confession of Helvetia*, “therefore, in controversies of religion, or matters of faith, we cannot admit any other judge than God Himself, pronouncing by the Holy Scriptures what is true, what is false, what is to be followed, or what to be avoided. So we do not rest but in the judgments of spiritual men drawn from the Word of God.”¹ We consequently denominate our genuine Protestantism as scriptural, and Stillingfleet’s definition as still practically accurate, “The Bible, and the Bible alone, the religion of Protestants.” (2) The Protestant Confessions agree in their doctrine regarding the *Triune God and His incarnation in the person of His Son Jesus Christ*. Accordingly we find all the Reformers retaining the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creeds, and some of them the so-called Athanasian also, and showing practical unanimity in both their Theology and Christology. The small section of Protestants, which has rejected the divinity of Christ, is no more a reflection on scriptural Protestantism than the Arianism of the early centuries was a reflection upon the orthodoxy of Athanasius. Scriptural Protestant-

¹ Cf. Hall’s edition of the *Harmony of Protestant Confessions of Faith*, p. 4; also the whole section, pp 1-18.

m is practically unanimous regarding the unity and tri-personality of the Godhead and the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of the Father.¹

3) The Protestant Confessions are practically unanimous regarding *Man's total depravity and condemnation and his justification by faith in Jesus Christ our Saviour*. Protestantism teaches a far deeper doctrine of sin than the church of Rome. It sets aside her distinctions of sin into "venial" and "mortal," making all to be mortal, and consequently promoting the sinner's return without delay to Jesus, through faith in whom he may be justified. It was here that Protestantism really arose, in Luther's assurance of salvation through Christ. "The Reformers," it has been truly said, "passed through the experience of St Paul; they felt the operation of the law upon the heart and conscience, like a schoolmaster leading to Christ. They started with an overwhelming sense of the awful fact of sin and the absolute need of redemption. Their theology was intensely practical, and turned on the question, What shall a man do to be saved, and how shall a sinner be justified before a holy and righteous God? To this the New Testament, and especially the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, returned the answer, 'Not by any works and institutions of man, not by any outward observances and performances, but solely by the free grace of God in Christ, which from the beginning, the middle, and the end of spiritual life.' This salvation by grace became the central doctrine, the experimental or subjective principle of evangelical Protestantism, and a fountain of comfort and peace in life and in death."² (4) The Protestant Confessions are practically unanimous about a *doctrine of Predestination*. In the *Harmony* quotations are made from only five out of the

¹ Cf. *Harmony*, *ut supra*, sects. 2, 3, and 6.

² Cf. Schaff, *ut supra*, pp. 159-160: also Hall's *Harmony*, sects. 4, 7, 8, and 9.

twelve Confessions, but two others have the matter of predestination referred to in sections not specially devoted to it. It is also the subject of the seventeenth article of the Church of England; it is referred to in the seventh article of the Church of Ireland; it constitutes the first chapter or head of doctrine in the Judgment of the Synod of Dort; and it receives accurate treatment in the third chapter of the Westminster Confession, which treats of "God's Eternal Decree." Undoubtedly this doctrine gave a very needful stiffening to the backs of the Reformers when they needed all the strength strong doctrine could impart to them. Mr Froude has yielded ungrudging testimony to the historic influence of the predestination idea.¹ At the same time we may say with Dr Schaff that "the subject of election holds a prominent and a disproportionate place in the Calvinistic system. It was a necessary and wholesome reaction against the papal doctrine of human merit. It was considered as the backbone of the doctrines of free grace, and was death to all pride and self-righteousness. It furnished an immovable basis in eternity for the salvation in time, and the most solid comfort to the believer in seasons of despondency and temptation. Hence we find it among all the Reformers. Luther in his tract on *The Slavery of the Human Will*, which he never recalled, but regarded as one of his best books, goes even further in this direction than Calvin ever did."² We may also add what the same writer says farther on in the same book:—"The problem of predestination and of the relation of the divine sovereignty to human responsibility is not yet solved, either philosophically or theologically, and will perhaps never be solved theoretically until we see face to face. But there is a practical solution in which all

¹ Cf. his address on *Calvinism* when rector of St Andrews; London, 1871.

² Dr Schaff, *ut supra*, p. 162.

True Christians can agree, namely, that all who are saved are saved by the free grace of God without any merit of their own—and this is Calvinism; and that all who are lost are lost by their own guilt in rejecting the gospel sincerely offered to them—and this is Arminianism. Good Calvinists preach like Methodists, as if everything depended on man; good Methodists pray like Calvinists, as if everything depended on God.”¹ (5) The Protestant Confessions are practically unanimous as to the *doctrine of the Church and of the Christian Ministry*. When the clause “the Communion of Saints” was inserted in the Apostles’ Creed after the clause “I believe in the holy Catholic Church,” and this was, according to Dr Sanday, about 400 A.D. in the Creed of Nicetas, there was given to the world the Protestant doctrine of the Church. For scriptural Protestantism maintains an invisible, ideal Church made up of all believers in all ages and in all countries, and a visible church, composed of those who have made a credible profession of their faith along with their children. The former is the CATHOLIC or universal Church, a term which can neither be monopolised by Donatists in the age of Augustine nor by Romanists now. The thorough investigation of this subject of the Church will lead candid inquirers to the Reformers’ position. Thus Bishop Butler has admirably expressed the truth upon the subject when he speaks of the Church as “a Society of believers, vitally united to the Lord Jesus Christ, their invisible Head; enlightened, guided, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit; and linked together by bonds of mutual sympathy and love. The unity of this society is independent of all merely external circumstances, such as place, or nation, or humanly devised rites and ceremonies. It is, in the highest sense of the words, an *organic unity*. St Paul, discoursing expressly on

¹ Dr Schaff, *ut supra*, pp. 174, 175.

the subject of the Unity of the Church (Eph. iv. 1-6), declares, first of all, that 'there is one Body and one Spirit.' In these words the true organic unity of the Church is comprised. 'One Body' expresses the actual connection of the members of the Church with their divine Head. 'One Spirit' denotes the internal principle of life which unites them to the Head and to each other. Every particular visible Church, in which, according to the definition of our Article, 'The pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administered,' contains more or fewer, as the case may be, of the true members of Christ's mystical Body. The aggregate of all such particular Churches constitutes the *Catholic Church of the Creed*. This aggregate may be called *one*, in respect (as Hooker expresses it, E. P. iii. 1-3), of 'that uniformity which all several persons thereunto belonging have, by reason of that *one Lord* whose servants they all profess themselves, that *one Faith* which they all acknowledge, that *one Baptism* wherewith they are all initiated' (Eph. iv. 5). But this kind of unity—an aggregation of distinct though similar parts—does not, as I have already said, come up to the idea of *organic* unity, as set forth by St Paul; which consists in the vital union of all the members of Christ's Body with Him as their invisible Head, and the spiritual communion which subsists between the members themselves, as integral parts of the same mystical Body. In this higher sense, the Catholic Church is indissolubly *one*, however externally distinct and even diverse the particular visible Churches which furnish its constituent elements may be."¹ Then as regards the ministry, the Confessions are unanimous upon the subject. The ministry is not a special *priesthood*. The priesthood is recognised as belonging to *all* believers. But

¹ Dr Butcher's *Reunion with Rome*, *ut supra*, pp. 30, 31: Hall's *Harmony*, sect. 10.

all are not in consequence to exercise "the ministry of the Word." This is to be reserved for men who have been found fit, and who are consequently called to the ministerial office. Luther was quite clear on this important subject. Thus he says in 1523, in a discourse on 1 Pet. ii. 9, "Christ is the eternal High Priest, anointed of God Himself, who has offered for us His own body, and prayed for us on the Cross, and also preached the Gospel, and taught all men to acknowledge God and Him. These three offices He has given us all. Since He is Priest, and we are all His brethren, all Christians have the authority and command to preach and proclaim God's grace and virtue, and to go before God, that one may intercede for the other, and offer himself to God. Nevertheless, as St Paul says that everything should be done in order, not every one should teach and administer the sacraments in the congregation, but those only who are called by the congregation, and to whom the office is entrusted, and the rest should listen in silence."¹ In another sermon on Ps. cx. 4, and in the year 1539, he says, "For while all are priests, yet not all are to preach or teach or govern, but some must be chosen from the entire body, to whom such office is to be entrusted. He who administers it is, with respect to his office, not a priest as the rest are, but a minister of all the rest; and when he can or will no longer preach or minister, he returns to the common body, hands his office to another, and is nothing more than any private Christian."² In the eleventh section of Hall's *Harmony* the deliverances of the various Confessions on this important subject are given at length, and they are unanimous upon the subject of the ministerial office. A quotation from the *Latter Confession of Heivetia* will place the Protestant doctrine

¹ Erlangen Edition of Luther's *Werke*, 1826-57; Band lii. s. 72.

² Cf. *Werke*, *ut supra*; Band xl. s. 171 sq.

in unmistakable clearness before us. "The Apostles of Christ do term all those which believe in Christ *Priests*; but not in regard of their Ministry, but because that all the faithful, being made Kings and Priests, may, through Christ, offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God (Exod. xix. 6; 1 Peter ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6). The Ministry, then, and the Priesthood are far different one from the other. For the Priesthood, as we said even now, is common to all Christians; so is not the Ministry. And we have not taken away the Ministry of the Church, because we have thrust the Popish Priesthood out of the Church of Christ. For surely in the new covenant of Christ, there is no longer any such Priesthood, as was in the ancient Church of the Jews; which had an external anointing, holy garments, and very many ceremonies, which were figures and types of Christ; who, by His coming fulfilled and abolished them (Heb. ix. 10, 11). And He Himself remaineth the only Priest forever; and we do not communicate the name of Priest to any of the Ministers, lest we should detract anything from Christ. For the Lord Himself hath not appointed in the Church any Priests of the New Testament, who, having received authority from the suffragan, may offer up the host every day, that is, the very flesh and very blood of our Saviour, for the quick and the dead; but Ministers, which may teach and administer the Sacraments." With this corresponds the twenty-third article of the Church of England; and the thirteenth of the articles of the Church of Ireland.

(6.) The Protestant Confessions show very remarkable harmony in the *doctrine of the Sacraments*. And here it may be well to clear up the position of Luther upon the subject. It is a matter of regret to everyone that he showed himself so obstinate at the Conference at Marburg, insisting upon the literal interpretation of the words

“This is my body.” It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that he had nothing but confused notions about the sacraments. He was very clear about the Word of God being the real means of grace in the sacraments. Thus he says in the small catechism which was published in 1529:—“Water, without the Word of God, is simply water, and not baptism; but, when connected with the Word of God, it is a baptism, *i.e.* a gracious water of life, and a washing of regeneration.” Again, regarding the second sacrament, he says, “The eating and drinking do not produce such great effects, but the words which stand here, *viz.*, ‘Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins.’ These words, that accompany the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief things in the sacrament, and he who believes these words, has that which they declare and set forth, *viz.* the remission of sins” (Small Catechism). The following quotation from his work *Von Anbeten des Sacraments* will help us to appreciate his position:—“Often have we said that the chief part in the sacrament is the Word of Christ, where He says, ‘Take eat, this is My body, which is given for you.’ In these words, everything is found, that every Christian should know and maintain, and should not permit to be wrested from him by any other doctrine, even though it were that of an angel from heaven. They are words of life and salvation, so that to him who believes them, through such faith all things are forgiven him, and he is a child of life, and has overcome hell and death. How great and mighty these words are, is inexpressible; for they are the sum of the entire Gospel. Far more stress, therefore, is to be laid upon these words than upon the sacrament itself; and a Christian should accustom himself to regard these words rather than the sacrament. Erroneous teachers, however, have perverted this everywhere, so that the Word is disparaged before the

people, and this faith vanishes, and the sacrament is converted into a mere external work without faith. Where, then, you attach the less honour to the words than to the sacrament itself, it is a certain sign that you do not understand the sacrament aright.”¹ A careful study of his works will preserve us from imagining that the Reformer entertained the crude ideas on Consubstantiation usually attributed to him. He was perfectly clear that the sacraments do not operate efficaciously without faith in the recipient; he would have opposed as earnestly the *opus operatum* theory as any of us. “Consubstantiation,” says a specialist upon the Lutheran literature, “often ascribed to him, is without a word of approval in his writings. . . . ‘Not the sacraments, but faith at the sacrament,’ said Luther, ‘quickens and justifies.’ . . . In marked contrast with the mediæval theory, Luther taught that the sacraments were not rites, in which man brought something to God, but that they were institutions and acts of God, in which He offered and conferred the grace of the Gospel.”² The Protestant doctrine of the sacraments may consequently be taken briefly to be this: they are two in number, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and in these by sensible signs Christ conveys to the believer the benefits of the new Covenant which He has ratified by His death. The sacraments do not operate mechanically and magically, so as to be independent of faith. Believers alone benefit by them. In the case of unbelievers, they partake to their own condemnation. One quotation from the *Former Confession of Helvetia* will suffice here to indicate the Protestant doctrine:—“Sacraments are visible patterns, instituted by God, of the grace, good-will, and promises of God towards us; some testimonies, and holy

¹ Cf. Luther’s *Werke*, *ut supra*, Band xxviii. s. 390 sq.

² Jacob’s *Martin Luther, the Hero of the Reformation*, G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York and London, 1898, pp. 372, 373.

remembrances, the which under earthly signs do represent unto us, and set before our eyes, heavenly gifts, and do withdraw the mind from earthly to heavenly things. Moreover, they be tokens of Christian brotherhood and fellowship. Therefore a Sacrament is not only a sign, but it is made up of two things, to wit, of a visible or earthly sign, and of the thing signified, which is heavenly; the which two although they make but one Sacrament, yet it is one thing which is received with the body, another thing which the faithful mind, being taught by the Spirit of God, doth receive. For the signs, and the things signified by the signs, do cleave together only by a certain mystical mean, or, as others speak, by a Sacramental union; neither be they so made one, that one is made in its nature the other, or that one is contained in the other. For either of them doth keep its own propriety. Therefore the outward signs are not the self-same thing, substantially and naturally, which they do signify; neither do they give it of themselves, and by their own power, no more than the Minister doth; but the Lord useth the Minister, and the signs, and the word, to this end, that, of his mere grace, when and so much as pleaseth him, he may represent, declare, visibly show, and set before our eyes, his heavenly gifts; and all this according to his promise.”¹

(8) The Protestant Confessions exhibit unanimity in their *doctrine of the Last Things*. They recognize but two places and states in the invisible world, heaven for believers and hell for unbelievers, with different degrees of bliss and of misery, according to the degrees of holiness and of wickedness reached in the present life. The mediæval fiction of a purgatory, where imperfect believers are fitted for heaven, is rejected. “But the doctrine of the middle state of all

¹ Cf. Hall's *Harmony*, *ut supra*, pp. 287, 288: also sect. 12-14, pp. 282-386.

departed spirits," says Dr Schaff, "between death and resurrection, which is distinct from the question of purgatory, was left unsettled, and is to this day a matter of theological speculation rather than positive doctrine. It is characteristic that the scriptural distinction between Sheol or Hades, and Gehenna or Hell, is obliterated in the Lutheran, the English, and other Protestant versions."¹

§ 5. *Protestant Union to be Promoted by a more careful study of Doctrine*

The above induction from the Protestant Confessions is sufficient for our immediate purpose, to get some idea of the salient principles of Protestantism. Of course in such a book as Winer's *Doctrines and Confessions of Christendom* we have a wider and more careful study than was possible in Beza's time. We shall have occasion to profit by Winer's investigations as we proceed. Meanwhile, we may close the present chapter by expressing our joy that the study of doctrine is receiving increased attention in all the Churches. The continental divines have been showing us the way, especially in the elaborate "Histories of Doctrine" with which for years past they have been supplying us; but our own divines are now beginning to respond, and every effort made is promptly welcomed in the German press. When the Faith is better comprehended, and its central Figure, Jesus Christ, becomes supreme in our various theological schools, we shall be nearer the union of all evangelical Protestants which the tendency of the times demands. The unity of truth is the only unity which will stand the wear and tear of time; mere comprehensiveness is not sufficient even as an expedient to meet "the present distress."

¹ Cf. Dr. Schaff's *Christ and Christianity*, *ut supra*, p. 166.

CHAPTER V

THE UNIFYING PRINCIPLE OF PROTESTANTISM IS TO BE
FOUND IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

§ 1. *The Harmony of the Confessions encourages still further effort after Unity*

IN last chapter by an induction carried out for us in the days of Beza, and which subsequent events have not invalidated, we have reached a very gratifying harmony as existing in the Protestant Confessions. Seven points of harmony claimed our notice. Of these, two in particular have been singled out as specially characteristic of Protestantism, the "formal principle," as it has been called, of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture as the rule of Faith, and "the material principle" of Justification through faith in Jesus Christ and through this alone. And by such an accomplished theologian as Dr J. A. Dorner, whose *History of Protestant Theology* is a veritable masterpiece, we find the system placed upon this dual basis. In a very interesting paper written in connection with the jubilee of Dr Claus Harms, he has discussed the relations of the two principles to each other, contending that neither can stand alone, but that they are complements of each other; and that it is by their union we are saved from pure idealism and mysticism on the one hand and from pure nominalism on the other.¹

¹ Cf. *Gesammelte Schriften aus dem Gebiet der systematischen Theologie, Exegese und Geschichte*, von Dr J. A. Dorner, Berlin 1883, No. ii. "Das Princip unserer Kirche nach dem inneren Verhältniss zu materialen und formalen Seite desselben zu einander."

And this is perfectly true. The charge that Protestantism is "a subjective form of religion" while "Catholicism is an objective," will be found to be more superficial than real.¹ We shall see later on that Catholicism, though outward and carnal in its constitution, taxes credulity to an enormous extent, more especially in its doctrine of Transubstantiation, and becomes *religiously* a subjective thing, incapable of verification, and in whose reality common-sense people cannot believe. Protestantism, on the other hand, by starting with a valid experience, in whose reality the individual can believe as firmly as in his own existence, keeps by what is real, and can consequently appropriate "the world without" as well as the "world within," and claim all for consecration. Yet we feel convinced that Protestantism can rise higher than a duality in its principles. Our minds are so constituted that we must have a unity, if this is possible. Schleiermacher contributed a famous formula to the controversy with Rome when he declared that "while Catholicism made the individual's *rappport* with Christ depend upon his connection with the Church, Protestantism made his connection with the Church depend upon his *rappport* with Christ." But this has the disadvantage of using the term "Church" in two different senses. The Church with which the individual is connected, when his faith in Jesus Christ is real, is the CATHOLIC CHURCH, invisible and universal, which is "the mother of us all," while the Church whose mechanical and outward connection an individual may have secured under promise of salvation through her sacraments may be, as we cannot but believe, not entitled to be called CATHOLIC at all! There is all the more need that we should go if possible farther and find in Protestantism a simple unity.

¹ Cf. Beard's Hibbert Lectures on *The Reformation in its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge*, London, 1883, p. 112.

§ 2. *The unifying principle will be found in the sovereignty of God*¹

When Luther, the greatest personality, as Dorner regards him, since the days of the apostles, awoke to the errors and crimes of the Church of Rome, all Europe lay under the sovereignty of the Pontiff. By expediences of the most worldly character the Roman Pontiff had seized the sovereignty of the world, and claimed an empire such as Alexander, Cæsar, or Charlemagne never thought of in their wildest dreams. The Pontiff claimed sovereignty over the souls as well as bodies of men; and wished to persuade kings and princes that by him alone could they reign. This far-reaching sovereignty could only be met, if it was false and unjust, by the recognition of another and

¹ Since the above was written a small book of great value has appeared from the pen of the Rev. W. N. Clarke, D.D., entitled *Can I believe in God the Father?* Writing from a Republican standpoint, the author hazards the opinion that the category of kingship with its implied sovereignty is giving place to something still higher, and will ultimately be superseded by that of fatherhood with its correlatives, sonship and brotherhood. "Thrones," he says, "might stand for a while, and regal rights might seem everlasting, and sovereignty might appear to be the final word by which to represent the relation of God to men. Yet royalty was a normal thing in human society only for a time, and was absolutely certain to yield, as it is yielding in our day, to institutions that have their ground in human equality and brotherhood. Kingship marks a long stage in human evolution, and yet a temporary one; it cannot, therefore, be the type of the abiding and eternal relation between God and men. And all the while there was existing by the side of royalty another relation, not arbitrary, not established, not variable, not temporary; a relation built into the very existence of humanity and essential to its continuance; a relation, indeed, that is the very means of the continued existence of humanity, and is therefore the very counterpart of the relation of God the creative Spirit to His spiritual creatures. The parental relation is natural, permanent, unchanging, indispensable, and is by its nature the truest analogue that can exist to the relation between God and men. It was not until the period of kingly institutions had spent itself, that the truth about fatherhood could become deeply effective in the thought of men concerning God. But when once its fitness has been discerned, and the paternal idea has taken the place that be'ongs to it, behold,

higher sovereignty, the sovereignty of God ! The unity, which the world-priest at Rome had brought about by usurpation, could only be met and overthrown by a unity which is right and just, under the sovereignty of God. And so Luther listened and heard the Divine voice in Holy Scripture, in conscience, in history, and the moment he recognised in God the Lord of the Conscience, sole and supreme, he was fitted for his contest with Rome. It is just here that we can see "the turning of the ways," the awakening of Europe, the death-knell of Rome. The despotism of a usurper can be met only by recognising the authority which is rightful and supreme, and this is the authority of God ! This will enable us to understand how the doctrine of predestination was a sheet-anchor with all the

there is thenceforth no return to institutional illustrations and temporary forms of thought. Here the abiding has been reached" (pp. 126-128). Following up this line of thought, Dr Clarke asks us to believe that the system which has made sovereignty its foundation thought, is destined to give place to another in which fatherhood will be recognised as basal and supreme. But a system must deal with facts as we find them. Dr Clarke's argument would be conclusive if all men came in due season to recognise God's fatherly relation and responded to it with filial obedience. But once admit that some souls may remain for ever in the state of the elder brother of our Lord's parable, who would not go in and be dutiful either as a son or as a brother (Luke xv. 28-32), then it is only the relation of sovereignty which can cover these cases of rebellion, and as "King of kings" God must deal with those who will not have Him to reign over them. While rejoicing, therefore, that humbled and penitent spirits do pass into that sweet state in which "religion is felt to be a family matter," between a Heavenly Father and an earthly child, we are compelled to acknowledge that the paternal does not cover the whole case, and that sovereignty must maintain its footing in presence of rebellion and will prove eternal. It is surely significant that Calvin, though living in a Republic at Geneva and exercising immense influence therein, never wavered for a moment in pivoting his system upon Divine sovereignty as alone comprehending all the facts. An instructive account of *Calvinism* has just appeared from the pen of Dr Kuyper, of Amsterdam, being six lectures delivered at Princeton, New Jersey, in October 1898. It is to be commended to the many who imagine they understand what Dr Clarke allows is "the consistent regal doctrine of God."

Reformers. The doctrine of predestination is the recognition of a reign of God in all things ; a belief that He can make even the wrath of men and of devils to praise Him ; that He can bring order out of every chaos, and work up the very sins of His creatures into far-reaching and pure purposes. It was this belief in Divine predestination which gave Luther grit before the diet of Worms, and carried the martyrs as well as the reformers through their resistance of despotism even to the death ! And so Protestantism means the awakening of Europe to a sense of the sovereignty of God. It was the substitution of God's kingdom for the sovereignty of the Pope. It was the recognition that God is " King of kings, and Lord of lords " ; the only rightful Ruler over the souls and bodies of men !

§ 3. *This Divine Sovereignty is Realised Directly by Jesus Christ in the individual experience with a view to the re-establishment of humanity in the Divine Communion*

Protestantism, it is asserted by the devotees of Rome, is mere individualism ; it is mere self-will on the part of the individual who has revolted against spiritual authority. But this is a total misconception. Protestantism was no revolt from authority as such ; it was revolt from authority which had proved false and immoral, and this, through recognising a higher authority which has always proved true and wholesome. When the reign of God was substituted for the reign of the Pope, the reign of God indicated by inspired Scriptures, by Conscience, by the lessons of History, there was no fear of wayward individualism, but the guarantee of sanctification and progress. Accordingly we find less licence under Protestantism than under Catholicism ; more wayward, eccentric individualism among the devotees of Rome than among all the Protestant sects. For what the Reformers believed and what Protestantism is steadily trying

to understand is that God's sovereignty took human shape in the incarnation of His Son. The nature of God, since Jesus came into our world, has been recognised as LOVE. The sovereignty of God is the reign of love. But just as wise love among men may often act in ways that are not apparent in a moment, but reveal themselves afterwards; so the reign of Jesus can be accepted as just and right and loving at bottom, even when it takes in our experience the form of tribulation and threatens to storm us out of carnal security and into the kingdom! But when His reign is set up within us as individuals, then we begin to see it is with a view to His reign in other men; and that His Church is likely in the long last to cover all the world. And so this is what Protestantism means, the reign of God in Christ set up in individual souls, in hope of the establishment of this reign to the ends of the earth! There is a great desire at the present time to work out truth from the central ground of the Incarnation. How great service can be rendered in this direction one may learn from such works as Thomasius and Gess have given us in Germany, and the authors of *Lux Mundi*, Canon Gore in particular, and Principal Fairbairn in our own country.¹ Even Roman Catholic advocates have not hesitated to make use of the Incarnation for controversial purposes, and Möhler in his renowned *Symbolik* has set the key in trying to persuade his readers that in the Church of Rome we have an extension of the Incarnation. But the sovereignty of God requires no such corollary, and is in fact, as we have seen, the great off-set to the Romish pretension.

¹ Cf. Dr G. Thomasius' *Christi Person und Werk*, third edition, Erlangen 1886; W. F. Gess' *Christi Person und Werk*, 3 vols., Basel, 1870-1887; *Lux Mundi*, a Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation, Twelfth Edition, 1891; Canon Gore's Bampton Lecture for 1891 on *The Incarnation*; and Principal Fairbairn's *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, London, 1893.

§ 4. *We can verify our supreme Protestant principle by seeing its application to the other principles recognised as Protestant*

Now if we look back for a moment to the six other principles of Protestantism associated with Predestination in our summary of the confessions, we shall see how the sovereignty of God embraces them all. In the first place, what do we mean when we maintain that Holy Scripture is the ultimate Rule of Faith? Evidently this, that in listening for the divine voice, we have found it in self-evidencing clearness in this Holy Word. God has spoken, we feel certain, in these canonical books. We can account for this literature of the Old and New Testament on no other supposition than that they are "inspired of God." And so God finds us and speaks authoritatively to us through them. It is the great Sovereign who speaks to us in the Holy Scriptures. In the second place, what are we to understand by the ancient creeds which Protestants and Romanists alike acknowledge? Manifestly they describe with precision of language the character of Him who is "King of kings and Lord of lords." Once we have realised what He is, we acknowledge His sovereignty over us, and in submission to Him we find our rest. In the third place, what is justification by faith, which Protestantism has so emphasized, but the sovereign God, whom we had offended by our sin, drawing near to us in the person of His incarnate Son, and extending to us a pardon without reserve? It is the clemency and acquittal of the offended Potentate extended to us on grounds of eternal righteousness. In the fourth place, what is the Church, the great society of believing souls, but the sovereignty of God realising itself directly by Jesus Christ through the re-establishment of divine Communion? In the ideal Church the unseen

Sovereign is realising His reign, and receiving from all believing souls the submission and surrender which make life so sweet. In the fifth place, what are the sacraments which, as we have seen, are made efficacious only to believers? Are not they ways by which the sovereign conveys His grace, not in magical power, but along lines of moral influence? And finally, what is the doctrine of the Last Things but the expression of the conviction that the great Sovereign will reach finality in a future life, and be able at a great Assize to assign to each individual his proper place either among His happy subjects or among His unreconciled and implacable enemies?¹ Now the right of private judgment in the Protestant idea is simply the right of the individual to hear God's voice and respond directly to it. It is this prerogative which makes us manly. We stand up in presence of our Sovereign and ask Him to make us fit for the task He has assigned to us.

¹ Cf. M. Hollard's article on *Protestantisme* in Lichtenberger's *Encyclopédie des Sciences Religieuses*: also Schenkel's *Das Wesen des Protestantismus*, Schaffhausen, 1862, particularly the third book on "Die Einheit des Protestantismus."

CHAPTER VI

PROTESTANTISM, THE REAL DAWN OF THE EXPERIMENTAL METHOD

§ 1. *Luther's Relations to the Old and New Learning*

WE have found in the sovereignty of God the grand set-off of the Reformers to the usurped sovereignty of the Church of Rome, and the one element which makes a unity of Protestantism. God was enthroned at the Reformation as "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" the only rightful King of the Conscience, in whose loving fellowship lost humanity is to find itself again. It will be useful now to point out the fact that in Protestantism we have the real dawn of that modern or experimental method which has given to us the new world of thought and progress in which we now rejoice.

The Middle Ages had a few observers here and there of the facts of nature, like Roger Bacon who "shone out," as Sir John Herschel has said, "at the obscurest moment, like an early star predicting dawn."¹ But the general tendency of the ages before Luther lay in deducing from the writings of Aristotle the state of things which *must* on *à priori* principles exist. Scholasticism, as it has been called, practically shut men up to logical deductions and distinctions, while the world of Nature and of realities lay around men comparatively unheeded. The "Nomin-
alists" in particular threw discredit upon general notions as something existing only in the mind, and having nothing

¹ Cf. Herschel's *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, 1831, p. 112.

corresponding to them in reality. The effect of the scholastic system was to narrow the world of observation in the greatest degree, and to make the world of thought a matter of hair-splitting logic. It was this system which was in the ascendant at Erfurt during the student days of Luther, as he sat at the feet of men like Trutvetter and Arnoldi. Of scholasticism Luther made a very thorough study, and his rebellion against Aristotle was after he had made himself master of his system and of the tyrannical hold his philosophy had upon the age. The teaching of the Church, as Luther found to his cost, had been completed by a rationalism in which Aristotle had been permitted to sit in judgment on Christ and the Apostles. Accordingly we find him in 1516 indignantly declaring that if Aristotle had not been flesh he would not hesitate to affirm that he was the very devil; and that it was a great cross to him that so much time was wasted in the universities in studying this writer.¹ But if Luther thus rebelled, and with reason, at the old learning, he took enthusiastically to the new learning as provided in the classics; and "he read them," as Melancthon tells us, "not like boys who pick out words, but for their doctrine and pictures of life. The maxims and judgments of these writers were closely examined, and, as his memory was faithful, most that he read and heard was ever at his command." Cicero was his favourite author, and he studied him as a master in philosophy. "He has written more," said Luther, "than all the philosophers, and has read all the books of the Greeks." After him came Ovid and Virgil, Livy and Strabo, Plautus and Terence. He was also anxious to have corrupt allusions in these writers

¹ Cf. Luther's Letter to Lange, given in De Wette's Collection i. s. 15, and quoted by Jacobs in his *Martin Luther, the Hero of the Reformation, ut supra*, p. 53.

cut out, so as to keep pure the moral atmosphere of the schools. But what we are bound to notice is the fact, which we have on the authority of Melancthon, that Luther's talents and attainments were "the admiration of the entire university." He was in fact the first man in the largest university of his time.¹ Many do Luther grievous injustice because he did not like Erasmus pursue in learned leisure his classical studies, and decline the great struggle of the age. But the man who, in three months at the Wartburg, produced his translation of the New Testament and therein laid the foundation of German literature, and whose works, thrown off as the great battle demanded, and which run to more than one hundred volumes, the German and Latin treatises combined, are still prized and perused as the most vital of literatures, has a right to be regarded as one of the mightiest of the intellectual giants who have promoted the freedom and welfare of the human race. We have in Luther one of the foremost men in all the files of time. But what is especially interesting about him is the openness of his mind. He was the modern man all over, ready to take in what the new world provided, ready to appreciate Nature in her varying moods, ready to keep pace with the age, nay, as we shall now see, to lead it.²

§ 2. *Luther's Assurance of Salvation through Faith gave reality to the world of Experience*

From the University where he had shown his pre-eminence, Luther passed, as everybody knows, to the Convent of the Augustinian monks, to find, after a long struggle, "peace with God." He found this not in the way of the Church;

¹ Cf. *Luthers Leben*, von Julius Köstlin, Leipzig, 1883, s. 39; also Jacobs, *ut supra*, p. 18.

² On the relation of Protestantism to Kant's Critical Movement, see *Kant's Bedeutung für den Protestantismus*, von Dr Katzer, Leipzig, 1897.

this he tried in vain; but in the way of direct access to God in Christ. He got the Bible in the Convent; was encouraged by Staupitz to study it; was encouraged to go to God Himself for forgiveness of sins; went and found, to his ineffable delight, peace and joy through simple believing. This assurance of salvation came to him through the Holy Scriptures, which were accepted by him as the very "Word of God" meant for him individually. This was his first lesson in the *experimental method*! Here he had a *fact* to begin with of the most important and far-reaching character. He was sure of God's existence, and that God in His grace had spoken to him "words of peace and welcome," and these words were in the "Holy Scriptures." He was also sure of himself, that he had passed out of hostility and alienation into the possession of God's peace. Real relations were now set up between him and God. He was a saved sinner and a willing subject; God was his Redeemer and King. Luther had entered God's Kingdom and everything was real and substantial to him.

Here is his language to every Christian: "Thou must be as certain of the matter, that it is God's Word, as thou art certain that thou livest, nay more certain; for upon it alone thy conscience must stand. And if all men were to come, yea, all the angels and all the universe were to come and decide a matter; if thou canst not apprehend the judgment for thyself, canst not decide for thyself, thou art lost. Thou must not base thy judgment upon the Pope or any other man; thou must be so skilled spiritually that thou canst say, 'This God says; that, not: This is right; that, wrong' else it is not possible for thee to stand. If thou rest upon the Pope and Councils, then Satan can soon make a breach and enter. What if they should be false? What if they should have erred? Then thou art at once overthrown and

lost. Therefore thou must enact the part of *one that is certain*. Thou must be able fearlessly to say: 'This is God's Word; upon this I will venture body and soul, and a hundred thousand necks.' The Romanists say: 'How can we know what is God's Word, and what is true or false? We must have it from the Pope and the Councils.' Very well. Let them determine and say what they will, I tell thee, thou canst not base thy Conscience upon it. Thou must decide for thyself; thy neck, thine all depends upon it."¹ Now it will be found that it is in this assurance of the Reformers they got their real guarantee and pledge of the reality of experience. Theologians of a later date have pointed out that assurance is not of the essence of faith; that is to say, a soul may be saved at last who was never in this life sure of his salvation. The Reformers indulged in extreme statements about the necessity of assurance.² Yet it is perfectly certain that if they themselves had not been men enjoying assurance of salvation, they could never have accomplished, as they did, the emancipation and salvation of Europe. And it is this very assurance which made them so intensely real and human in all their new life. Luther, of whom we necessarily must think most, in considering the meaning of the Reformation, was the most human and real of men. He was a far greater foe of shams and false appearances than such a man, for example, as Thomas Carlyle; for the simple reason that he was far surer of his position before God and among men than the Chelsea sage ever was. His whole experience got the note of reality it needed from his assurance of faith. He knew

¹ Luther's *Werke*, Band vi. s. 182: quoted in *The Groundwork of a System of Evangelical Lutheran Theology*, by Samuel Sprecher, D.D., LL.D., Philadelphia, 1879, p. 106.

² Cf. Dr Cunningham's chapter on "The Reformers, and the Doctrine of Assurance," in his *Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*, Edinburgh, 1862.

that behind Nature as well as behind the Holy Scriptures there was a personal God, a great Spirit, who had in love for the sake of His Son forgiven Luther his sin and extended to him peace and joy through believing. Accordingly he could handle Nature as a poet, and see in all experience the evidence of God.

§ 3. *The Experimental Method has had its best friend in Protestantism*

Dorner in his *History of Protestant Theology* has pointed out how the Reformation has helped science. "Faith," he says, "with its religious certainty, sets up, as it were, in the innermost centre of man, the original, the prototype of the certainty which science also ought to strive after, the equalisation of knowing and being, the assumption of the latter into the former, and the rendering it transparently intelligible, the transferring of thought, which nevertheless stands apart from the objective reality, into the province of the real. And that archetype of certainty is the more fertile, since faith has become aware and certain of the central truth, upon which all other knowledge grows, and in which the whole world is possessed, in reference to the beginning and end, of a firm and luminous centre, so that starting from it, a connected system of knowledge may be developed in union with the supreme, divine principle."¹ It is instructive to follow out historically this point. For the Roman Catholic investigators such as Copernicus, Galileo, and Descartes found themselves hampered at every turn by the traditions of the Church; while Lord Bacon, Newton, and Faraday, to mention only first class names, found themselves encouraged and stimulated by that Protestant spirit which counsels every man to "prove all things" and then

¹ Cf. Dorner, *ut supra*, vol. i. p. 258. The same truth is insisted upon by Sprecher, *ut supra*, p. 48, etc.

to "hold fast that which is good." A very interesting investigation, moreover, of the relation of modern science to the religious spirit has been given us by M. Naville in his *Modern Physics*, where he points out how all the really first class men, Copernicus, Kepler, Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, Newton, Leibnitz, Ampère, Liebig, Fresnel, Faraday, and Mayer, were believers in God, and only one man of any mark, Laplace, was a profound unbeliever, and even "he is not an initiator, a founder in the true sense of the term." M. Naville feels certain that the religious faith in God gives an interest to the investigation of Nature which Atheism can never afford; and endorses M. du Bois-Raymond when some years ago he said to German naturalists assembled at Cologne, "Though it may sound like a paradox, modern science owes its origin to Christianity. . . . This idea of God, handed down for ages from generation to generation, came at last to react upon science itself, and, by accustoming the human mind to the conception of a unique reason for things, kindled in it the desire to know that reason."¹ We may thus see that religious faith and modern science, instead of being really at war, are mutually helpful. It has only been the traditions of the Church which have provoked a conflict. The Protestant spirit has given freedom to every investigation; has encouraged it; has promoted a healthy sense of reality in all things; and is not afraid, and need not be, of any honest inquiry.

§ 4. *The Experimental Method is destined to be applied to all things under the guidance of the Protestant Spirit*

Now the position of Luther and the Reformers as they came into the light of assurance of faith was this; they

¹ P. 175.

had reached experimentally the assurance not only that God exists, but that He was speaking to their spirits through His Holy Word; and had extended His grace to them in pardoning their sins and cleansing them from unrighteousness. They believed the Bible not because councils and tradition and the Church declared it to be God's Word, but because they had felt it as a message to their own souls. It had proved a means of grace. The Spirit had used it as His instrument of power. The experimental method had thus been applied to this particular literature, and they had found it to stand the test. It was a divine message to their souls. The Reformers, as we shall see, devoted themselves with unflagging zeal to the mastery of the Divine Word. Luther became a doctor in the Scriptures, as he chose to put it, rather than in theology, and gave his strength to the exposition from the professor's chair, from the pulpit, and from the press of God's Holy Word. Calvin again was so occupied with Scripture at Geneva that no reference is to be found in all his works to the beautiful world in whose midst he lived. But the love of Nature and the investigation of it went on under Protestantism. A free hand and toleration were in due season given to all. Men ran into extremes. They thought that Nature could be shown to convey a different message from that of Scripture. But Bishop Butler by his immortal *Analogy* showed that Nature and the Bible have presumptively the same Author, for the same difficulties and encouragements are to be found in both. The study of Nature goes on still, and we are now recognising in Nature an organic unity as well as in the Bible; so that the old idea of both being "manufactured articles," bits of machinery, turned out by a Divine Mechanic is giving place now to the better idea that both Nature and Revelation are *organic growths*, and are outcomes of an

immanent and omnipresent Spirit.¹ We are thus getting to know Nature and the Bible better. We are collecting *facts*, no fact in Nature or in Scripture is unwelcome; then we cast about for good working *hypotheses*, although in matters theological we call the hypotheses *doctrines*; and then we verify these in experience or by experiment. In this way Protestantism encourages us to "prove all things," and then to "hold fast that which is good."² And the application of the experimental method will surely lead us along safe lines to an increasingly deep discernment of God in Nature, in History, and in the Holy Scriptures!

¹ Cf. the Introduction in the late Aubrey L. Moore's *Science and the Faith*, second edition, 1889, p. xlv., etc.

² Cf. "La Methode Experimentale et le Christianisme," by Prof. Doumergue in *La Verité Chretienne et Le Doute Moderne*, Conférences pour la Défense du Christianisme, Paris, 1879.

CHAPTER VII

PROTESTANTISM, HAVING FOUND A SPLENDID RULE OF FAITH
IN GOD'S HOLY WORD, DECLINES TO MAKE THE COMMAND-
MENTS OF GOD OF NONE EFFECT BY THE TRADITIONS OF
MEN

§ 1. *Luther at the Wartburg*

LUTHER, as we have just seen, entered into the reality of a great experience when he felt before God justified by faith. He saw God as his rightful King extending His clemency to His sinful subject and calling him into communion. It was the written Word which had conveyed the Divine peace. It had become a means of grace to his soul, a sword of the Spirit subduing him and consoling him. And so he could pass through the ordeal at the diet of Worms heroically. The position he takes up when challenged by Eckius is, "I never will submit to popes and councils when they are manifestly in the wrong. But I'll submit to the Scripture God has given me, and to the conscience that is in me *here*."

"Brave words," it has been truly said, "though commonplace enough they seem to us. But they have startled that assembly like a peal of thunder; and from a hundred swords and crosiers the lightning of defiance flashes back, and there are muttering thunders of Huss and of martyrdom by fire! And once more Dr Eckius stands forth, 'These are thy books! Dost thou retract or no?' A moment's pause as if he had faltered, but he does not, for he is praying. Speak, monk! the empire and the Church are listening for thy word! Speak, monk! the nations struggling to be free

are listening ! Speak, monk ! the nations yet unborn are listening too ! Speak, monk ! even blinded revolutionary France amid her blindness lifts her head and listens ! Speak, monk ! nobles from England, from Whitehall, and Cromwell's Ironsides, and pilgrims from voyages across the deep, and negro slaves in the nineteenth century are listening ! And who knows what beyond ? *all* listening for thy word ! And from above, the noble army of martyrs are bending down and listening ! But Luther sees not these. Luther sees his 'fortress firm'—the Lord his God—and rests on Him, and says 'Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders, so hilf mir Gott !'—'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, so help me God !' It may seem scarcely possible that moral bravery should go beyond this. But there was something bolder still (it seems to me) in Luther in the castle of Wartburg and the battle with the devil. For when the Worms Diet is dissolved, . . . with characteristic humbleness of mind this greatest man, undoubtedly the greatest hero of his day, is off to visit his humble relations amongst the peasantry of Mœrha in the woodlands of Thuringia, and being seized at some turn of the woods by the vizored knights of Friedrich (who was greatly more careful of his safety than he was himself), as the prophets of old were hid in a cave from the wrath of Ahab and of Jezebel, so Luther is conveyed to the castle of Wartburg, the grim fortress crowning the hill behind Eisenach, and overlooking, miles on miles around, the sable forests of Thuringia. Here disguised as 'Junker Georg,' a rather fast young German gentleman, moustached, with feathered cap and green slashed doublet, and a sword—as we have seen him pictured often in Luke Cranach's portraits of the 'Master George'—he follows the huntsmen in the summer woods, the gay green huntsmen with their bugled halloo, and the melodious mur-

mur of the hounds; and were it not for his womanly tenderness when poor Puss is worried, or Reynard run down, and the comparison he continuously insists on making of poor Puss to the Church, and the huntsmen and hounds to the Pope and the Devil, no one might even suspect that gay young count, this 'Master George,' was the monk of Wittemberg at all!

"And now the autumn is past, and summer ended, and dreary winter is coming on—and here in his 'Patmos,' as he calls it, in his castle in the clouds, in his nest among the birds of the air, he is engaged in translating the Bible—making that admirable version which, like our own, and Diodati's, springing from the period when the language had the bloom and freshness of its youthful vigour on it, can never I believe be superseded. 'I am here,' writes Luther, 'at once the idlest and busiest of mortals. I study the Hebrew and Greek Bible, and write without interruption, while the master of the castle treats me with a distinction far above my merit.' 'The translation of the Bible,' says Pfizer in his *Life of Luther*, 'was the greatest, the most meritorious, the most blessed of all Luther's works, and he actually finished the *New Testament* before leaving his Patmos. The belief that the translation of the Bible was the fruit of Luther's imprisonment is so general that the castle of the Wartburg and the German Bible are almost identified in the minds of the people; and it is indeed remarkable that a castle which, as the scene of the celebrated conflict of the Minne-singers, or troubadours, contributed to form an important epoch in German poetry, should likewise have been the cradle of a work, which may justly be regarded as the foundation of the present German prose.'"¹

Now we can have no better embodiment of the Protestant

¹ Cf. Dr William B. Robertson's *Martin Luther—German Student Life—Poetry*, second edition, Glasgow: MacLehose, 1892, pp. 53-57.

spirit than Luther thus engaged at the Wartburg. Reconciled to God through Christ, he is able to enjoy Nature and to realise that it too is his Heavenly Father's. But the leisure must be utilised for the common weal; and he must give the German people in their own tongue that Word of God which has made all things new to himself. Having experienced the peace-giving power of the Divine Word, he must place the same privilege and means of grace before his countrymen.

§ 2. *His leaving of the Wartburg is also a manifestation of the Protestant Spirit*

For it was the extravagance of agitators who depreciated the authority of the Holy Scriptures and professed to have immediate revelations, which drew him from his seclusion on the mountain-top to Wittenberg. He ran great risks in doing so, but his calm deliverances, in eight sermons on the duty of the Lord's people in the crisis, and which breathe the very spirit of toleration, restored the people to their senses and kept the movement within the bounds of the Divine Word. He was able also to secure the help of others, better versed in Hebrew, in the translation of the Old Testament, so that his grand project, to which his friends had urged him, of providing a new and better translation of the entire Scriptures, was in due season accomplished. To the Divine Word he bowed, and he wanted all his countrymen to take up the same attitude towards Him whose Word it was. No "inner light" is to be allowed to supplant the outer Word. It speaks to the spirit as no vision can do. It must be heeded and all else judged thereby. A letter to Melanchthon before his return reveals his attitude towards the visionaries: "I cannot approve of your timidity. When they make professions concerning themselves, they are not to be immediately heard,

but, according to the directions of John, the spirits must be tested. You have also the advice of Gamaliel concerning deferring judgment, for there is nothing, as far as I have heard, that they have said or done, that Satan cannot imitate. Only try, in my stead, whether they can prove their vocation. For God never sent any one, not even His Son, unless called by man, or approved by signs. Examine whether they have experienced spiritual distress. If you hear only smooth, tranquil, devout, and religious things of them, even though they profess to have been carried to the third heaven, do not give them your approval, because the sign of the Son of Man is wanting. Try them, therefore, and listen not even to the glorified Christ unless you have first seen Him crucified.”¹

§ 3. *Luther's Relation to Criticism*

The Bible in its entirety, as man's rule of faith, was thus laid before the German people as the basis of Protestantism. We must not lose sight of the Protestant relation to Holy Scripture. Protestantism accepts of the Bible as God's Word, because God speaks through it to our individual spirits. It is not accepted on *authority*, although the external evidences are not neglected, but as a *verifiable experience*! It is God's Word because God speaks through it here and now to me, and to every man who honestly accepts the Book. Of course, the experiment of reading Scripture and listening for God's voice in it has to be conducted carefully and prayerfully and repeatedly. Portions of God's Word may not at first be appreciated; their meaning may not be reached until they have been studied for years; but the genuine Protestant believes in the inspiration of the Word *because it is the vehicle of God who speaks to him through it*! This will enable us to under-

¹ Cf. Jacobs' *Martin Luther, ut supra*, p. 213.

stand Luther's remark about the Epistle of St James, a remark which has been torn from its context and misapplied, to the great detriment of the Reformer. Taking up Holy Scripture as God's great vehicle of grace, Luther found that the Epistle of St James had no such message to *his* spirit as the Gospel of St John or the Epistles of St Paul. He accordingly compares these portions of Scripture as sources of spiritual experience, and pronounces the Epistle of James as, in comparison, an epistle of straw. Here are his words in their proper setting in his Introduction to the New Testament: "The Gospel of St John and his First Epistle, the Epistles of St Paul, especially those to the Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and the First Epistle of St Peter, are the books that instruct us concerning Christ and teach us all that it is necessary and salutary for us to know, even though you should never see or hear another book. *In comparison with these*, therefore, the Epistle of St James is actually nothing but an epistle of straw, for it has in it nothing whatever of the Gospel."¹ The words italicised show Luther's meaning. He did not reject *James* as uncanonical; he simply declared that it did not convey the Gospel to his spirit as the other Scriptures mentioned had done. The method he followed was the "experimental method." And this is the broad distinction between Protestantism and Romanism in relation to Holy Scripture. Protestantism pursuing the experimental method finds in Holy Scripture God's great *means of grace*. His voice is in this Book so unmistakably and definitely and profitably that it is accepted as a presently inspired literature. The question of Protestantism is not so much "Were the men who wrote this 'Divine library' inspired?" but "Is this

¹ Cf. Luther's *Werke*, Band lxiii. s. 115: see also on 1 Peter i. 1. *Ibid.* Band li. s. 337.

Book here and now inspired to speak home to my individual spirit and to the spirit of every child-like reader of the Word?" And Protestantism prizes the Book because it is a present message to men! "We in these last days," says Mr Chretien, "when we seek to renew in our hearts the image of Christ, and in our minds the doctrines of His gospel, turn with a sure instinct to the precious records which those earliest times have left us—to the simple teaching of the uneducated Galilean, to the fervid eloquence of the Apostle of the Gentiles, to the sublime devotion of St John. Yet these writings we take not primarily as the writings of St Matthew, or St Paul, or St John, but as the inspired Word of God. We call them inspired, because His Spirit breathes through them now. We know that He breathes through them, not only by present experience and observation, but by their connection with the history of the past. For the Bible does not stand alone. We do not find it lying, in awful and mysterious isolation, like an antique pillar, covered with strange hieroglyphics, on the shores of time. It stands in the closest and most obvious relation to the present state of the world, and its past religious experience. It is the Word of God, for it tells us of the work of God, and does the work of God even now. It is the enduring form in which God has been pleased to cast the Gospel which existed before it. It is, together with Christendom, the great document of Christianity. The Church is the work of God; the Bible is the Word of God. In it, He, through human instruments, has written, in His way, His will. In it, we, reading what He has written, decipher His will towards us. The human instrument was necessary to write, just as the human eye and mind are necessary to read; but it is the Word of God, and not of man. It may be worth while considering," he continues, "whether this

is not the best way to approach the subject of Inspiration—to consider the Bible as itself the Inspired Word through which God speaks to our spirits. As an inspired Word, it was written by inspired men; but the first truth to *us* is *its* inspiration, not *theirs*.”¹ “It is,” says Dr Denney, “through an experience of its power that words like inspiration come to have any meaning, and when we define them apart from such experience we are only playing with empty sounds. . . . No Christian questions such a proposition as this, that God actually speaks to man through the Scriptures, and that man hears the voice and knows it to be God’s. No Christian questions that through the Scripture the believing soul has fellowship with God its Father and Redeemer in Christ Jesus. These are things of experience which need no guarantee beyond themselves. ‘If,’ said Professor Robertson Smith, ‘I am asked why I receive Scripture as the Word of God, and as the only perfect rule of faith and life, I answer with all the fathers of the Protestant Church, because the Bible is the only record of the redeeming love of God, because in the Bible alone I find God drawing near to man in Christ Jesus, and declaring to us in Him His will for our salvation. And this record I know to be true by the witness of His Spirit in my heart, whereby I am assured that none other than God Himself is able to speak such words to my soul.’”² We see accordingly that Luther in adopting the experimental method in the use of Scripture was laying down the foundations of Protestantism as practically the experimental acquaintanceship of God in Christ through the written Word. Hence the great Reformer’s openmindedness to serious criticism. For criticism that is not flippant but

¹ Cf. Chretien’s *The Letter and the Spirit*, Six Sermons on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture preached before the University of Oxford. Cambridge: Macmillan & Co., 1861, pp. 10-13.

² Cf. Denney’s *Studies in Theology*, London, 1894, pp. 203-5.

serious should be "hallowed," since it is an honest effort to get at the pure Word of God, and to separate from it all apocryphal and make-believe additions to it.

§ 4. *The Exegetical Work of Protestantism*

Now in strict accordance with all this, Luther and his fellow Reformers became the great expositors of Holy Scripture. When he became "Doctor of Theology," he preferred being called "Doctor of the Holy Scriptures." When he entered upon his duties as theological professor, it was not to lecture upon the scholastics, but to discard these for the Holy Scriptures. Five years before he nailed up his theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg, he had substituted the study of the Scriptures for the study of the schoolmen in the classroom of the University.¹ And his commentaries on the Psalms, Galatians, and the other portions of Scripture give to us in its most vivid form the Protestant Spirit. Indeed so enamoured was Luther of the treasure of Holy Scripture that he never gave up popular exposition for any systematic theological treatise. He left the systematising of gospel truth to Melanchthon. He was so dissatisfied with scholasticism that he left to others the formation of what has been superficially called "Protestant Scholasticism." He had no taste and no time for such work as we find in Melanchthon's *Loci Communes*, or, at a later date, in Calvin's *Institutes*. He was the most popular and copious expositor of certain portions of the Divine Word that the world has ever seen. Calvin was also a great Expositor. Profiting by the experience and example of the older Reformers, the Frenchman outdistanced them all in his Commentaries, which were mainly produced as part of his pulpit work in Geneva. And when we take up his *Institutes* we find it to be a popular unfolding

¹ Cf. Jacobs' *Martin Luther*, *ut supra*, p. 42.

of Scriptural truth on the avowed basis of the Apostles' Creed; the most scientific work in theology that the sixteenth century produced. And Protestantism has followed up this exegetical work of the Reformers by vast libraries of exposition. The contribution of the Church of Rome to the exposition of God's Word is a mere drop in the bucket, when compared with the Commentaries of Protestantism. An occasional commentator, like Schand of Munich, appears among the Romanists to redeem the Church from the charge of utter neglect of the Divine Word; but so far as the understanding of Holy Scripture is concerned, it is to Protestantism and not to the "infallible guide" the earnest student must look for real assistance. God's Word has never been so faithfully and earnestly studied as by Protestantism. We stand in the true Protestant succession when we study this best of books with the very marrow of our bones, because it has proved itself "holy oracles," from which divine guidance may be constantly obtained!¹

§ 5. *Protestantism and the Higher Criticism*

Protestantism, as we have just seen, welcomes all criticism of a serious character, believing that it must ultimately help to the fuller understanding of the Divine Word. There is only one embargo which Protestantism places upon the critical spirit, and it is this, that it shall not be allowed to falsify what has already been *verified in experience*. Suppose, then, that a critic appears whose *à priori* assumption is that the supernatural cannot be a matter of knowledge. This was the quiet assumption, for example, of Baur and his school; history, they said, is only possible when we assume that the chain of cause and effect has never been interfered with. This assumption is still made.

¹ Cf. Werner's *Geschichte der Katholischen Theologie*, München, 1866, s. 273-275.

But it would be well for believing Protestants to start with their own experience of Divine mercy coming through the application of the written Word. Here is a vital experience which enables us to contradict the unscientific assumption. Criticism, which assumes that God cannot or will not interfere personally now, is invalidated by the testimony of the Christian consciousness. And the pity is that so many have entered upon the consideration of critical questions without this grand initial experience. "Only the man," says the late Professor Stearns, "who comes to the examination of the Bible and its phenomena with that first-hand knowledge of the truth of its great facts and doctrines which comes from personal experience, is competent to enter upon these critical and historical investigations and likely to find a satisfactory solution of them. What we complain of is that these investigations have been so largely carried on by men who have distinctly repudiated the Christian experience and have come to the subject with naturalistic presuppositions. And still more do we complain that Christian scholars often allow themselves blindly to follow such men when their own standpoint, if they could only understand it, is altogether different. When, however, the evidence of Christian experience has been given its proper place, the way is opened for the fullest and freest investigation of the historical and critical questions relating to the Bible. It is not the Christian who has the witness in himself and knows what he believes, who is timid about subjecting the Bible to the tests of criticism. Such a Christian has no fear that the Bible will suffer by dealing thus with it, but is convinced that whatever new facts may be discovered concerning it, will only serve to bring out more fully the Divine claim of the precious Book to truth and authority. He is quite willing to revise his views as to details, and he quietly awaits the results of those scholarly

investigations which have for their object to determine the time, order, and structure of the larger portions of the Scripture, and their relations to each other. . . . He can afford to make the largest concessions to criticism, provided only it does not proceed upon presumptions destructive to revelation and antagonistic to spiritual religion."¹ Protestantism may, then, with safety proceed according to the experimental method in its study of the Word. All undoubted facts which are discovered will be welcomed; all working hypotheses based upon them will be considered with open mind; and verification will be carried out as thoroughly as Christian experience will allow. Protestantism believes that the old Book will stand every test which can be legitimately applied to it, and will increase in its real influence as the Word of the living God.

God had evidently sufficient confidence in His inspired Word to leave it, like other literature, to the usual conditions attaching to "ancient books." He did not need to place His original apostolic and prophetic autographs in glass cases, but could allow them to associate with other books so that a "survival of the fittest" could be found here as elsewhere under His rule. Indeed "certain apocryphal" productions seem to have been purposely preserved like foils to set off the real gems which have their place in the Canon. And results have justified the procedure.

§ 6. *Holy Scripture is a Guide to Christ rather than to a Church*

The experience which the Reformers had verified and which is at the basis of evangelical Protestantism is that Scripture is a guide to Christ the Redeemer. The Church of Rome insists that Holy Scripture is a Divine guide to a

¹ Cf. *The Evidence of Christian Experience*, by Prof L. F. Stearns, New York, 1891, pp. 319, 320; see also Zenos' *Elements of the Higher Criticism*, New York, 1895, pp. 161-166; and Sprecher's *Groundwork*, *ut supra*, pp. 168-186.

particular Church, which, visible and unmistakable, is prepared to save men through her sacraments. Indeed since the days of Möhler the idea has been circulated that she is the extension of the Incarnation, and the present saviour of the world.¹ Hers is the "living voice," superior to the written Word. But she can hardly have much confidence in Scripture as a guide to the true Church, since she is at no pains to circulate the guide-book; and uses it, when for decency she does so in her services, in an unknown tongue. Besides, it is surely a significant fact that rival Churches find great difficulty in making out a "divine right" for their separate systems, proving at least *primâ facie* that guidance to a *Church* was not the prime purpose of this Book. On the contrary, its prime purpose is to guide us to a Person, to Him who hath eternal life and can bestow it. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10). And He said Himself when among men, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life, and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me that ye may have life" (John v. 39—R.V.) He is in fact the Hero of the whole Book. In type, in prophecy, in promise, in history is the Saviour pressed by this wonderful literature upon our attention, so that its saving efficacy consists in its guidance of our souls to Him. The Bible never asks us to trust in a *Church* for salvation, but to trust in a *Saviour*! The Bible never suggests that out of a certain particular Church there can be no salvation—it never seeks to substitute faith in a Church for faith in a Saviour. Protestantism accordingly promotes the circulation of this guide-book as the best way of leading souls to the Saviour. The Church of Rome, although professing that the Bible is her particular property, and guides souls straight to her bosom, somehow makes

¹ Cf. Möhler's *Symbolik*, Vierte Auflage, s. 10, 11.

very little effort to guide men *Biblically* to her embrace. Visibility is easier than proof. Seeing is believing. The means of grace have, forsooth, been granted to one corporation only—it is a case of monopoly—let souls who need salvation place themselves in the care of the Church of Rome! Such is the policy she pursues. It is not, at all events, a Biblical one.

§ 7. *As a Rule of Faith, the Scriptures have been found sufficient*

Individuals and communities have as a matter of fact tested the old Book as a Rule of Faith and Practice, and it has not disappointed them. The experimental method has been followed. Restricting themselves to Holy Scripture, asking the guidance of no Confessor with his casuistical directions, they have found, every Scripture inspired of God profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, finished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. iii. 16—R.V.). Biblical morality has been tested and found sufficient to bear any strain. What God commands in His Word, the directions He gives to individuals, to members of families and servants, to tribes and nations, are quite sufficient. The morality of the Sermon on the Mount has not been, and cannot be surpassed. Any change made in the moral demand must be for the worse. Individuals by following the Divine directions in the Holy Scriptures have become illustrious saints. Nations, so far as they have accepted the Bible as their standard of appeal, have become homes of righteousness. The old Book has exalted them. It has proved the charter of freedom, and the guide to success. The missionary has put this Divine code to an instructive experiment. He has found it lifting men out of a savage state into civilisation.

In the light of the experimental method, the Bible has been found to be the source of the purest and simplest and strongest morality the world has ever seen.

§ 8. *Protestantism declines to make the Commandments of God of none effect through accepting the traditions of men*

The Church of Rome, as we have seen, is not anxious to disseminate the Word of God. She has given no proof of any large attention to it. Although committing herself to the most extreme form of verbal inspiration, as the Pope's encyclical of 1893 shows, although believing that Holy Scripture is in every word "dictated" by the Holy Ghost, so that the human authors were "pens" not "penmen" in the matter of their inspiration, she nevertheless insinuates that this is insufficient and insists on enlarging the rule of faith by including "the Apocrypha" and adding tradition. Of the source of tradition she asks us to believe that it was Christ and His apostles, who spoke more than we have in Scripture, and it has come down to us through the Church.¹ Now to place the "Apocrypha" within the Canon, even with the understanding that these books possess only a second-rate inspiration, is quite capricious. The authors never claim inspiration for themselves and the Jews never attributed it to them. Nothing could demonstrate more thoroughly the inadequate attention the Church of Rome has given to the whole problem of Revelation. Then as for tradition, it is manifest that we could have no assurance of the faithful transmission of Apostolic traditions unless the Church herself be infallible. This dogma of infallibility is rejected by the verdict of history.² Moreover, the ecclesiastical traditions are found to set at naught the commandments of God. It can be shown that the morality,

¹ Cf. *Can. et Dec. Conc. Trid.*, sess. iv.; also *The Creed of Pius IV.*, articles i. and ii.

² Cf. Dr Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church*, *passim*.

provided by the ingenuity of the Jesuits, sets the entire law of God at defiance, and is simply a Church becoming a law unto herself. Whatever is right in her own eyes she has decreed for her devotees. Some extreme theologians have asserted that what is right is simply what God wills; as if He in the exercise of will power alone could decree the righteousness of an action, and, if He pleased, reverse the standard to-morrow. Such a statement of the moral standard is now rejected in favour of an eternal standard agreeable to God's own nature and to which every moral being ought to conform. But the caprice which thinkers now hesitate to attribute to the most High God is assumed by the Church of Rome, who insists on modifying and setting aside the undoubted Commandments of God in favour of a morality of mere expediency. God insists on being the only Object of worship—the Church of Rome allows the worship of saints and angels and relics. Her quibble about the new worship being only “service,” (δουλία) and in the case of the Virgin, “superior service,” (ὑπερδουλία), while the superlative article (λατρεία) is reserved for God Himself has no foundation in Scripture or experience. She has made God's *First Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God commands men to abstain from all idolatry; the Church of Rome sets aside the Commandment, and allows the worship of images. Indeed in some of the Romish Catechisms the second commandment is entirely omitted, and the tenth divided into two that the requisite number may be preserved.¹ Thus does she make God's *Second Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God again forbids blasphemy and perjury; the Church of Rome indulges in both. She assumes divine titles and honour. She encourages her priests to equivocate about the secrets of the confessional and her people to keep no faith with heretics.

¹ Cf. *Can. et Dec. Conc. Trid.*, sess. xxv.; also Dr Begg's *Handbook of Popery*, Edinburgh, 1852, p. 129.

Confirmation of this will be found in Peter Dens' Theology. Thus again does she make God's *Third Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God commands us to keep His day holy; the Church of Rome allows the Lord's Day, after mass is celebrated, to degenerate into a day of sports. Again does she make God's *Fourth Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God again commands children to honour their parents; but the Church of Rome takes the responsibility of entering into family confidences by her confessional and, when she pleases for her own ends, is prepared to set children against their parents.¹ Thus as before does the Church of Rome make God's *Fifth Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God commands men not to kill their fellows; the Church of Rome has violated the Commandment by her theory and practice of persecution. History shows that she has made herself drunk with the blood of the saints. Thus has she made God's *Sixth Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God forbids adultery; the Church of Rome by her inculcation of celibacy, and inordinate exaltation of virginity, whether in male or female, has thrown the marriage state into the background as an inferior social condition. The result, as attested by history, has been the most frightful violations of the Divine commandment, popes, priests, monks, nuns being one and all convicted of immoralities sufficient to make religious institutions in many cases simply Sodoms.² Thus has she once more made God's *Seventh Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God again forbids theft; but the Church of Rome makes theft in certain cases a venial sin, and a Jesuit like Liguori has ingenuity enough

¹ This occurs time after time in connection with conventual arrangements.

² Ample proof of these charges can be found in Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, in Dr Begg's *Handbook*, *ut supra*, pp. 164-174, etc. In this connection it may be worth while to state a fact which is notorious, that the vast majority of "fallen women" are known to be Roman Catholic by profession.

to palliate theft in certain circumstances. Servants, for example, are encouraged to steal from their masters if they imagine they are not sufficiently remunerated. In this way the whole moral relation of master to servant is undermined. Thus again does the Church of Rome render God's *Eighth Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. God again forbids false witness against our neighbour; but the Church of Rome has in her Jesuit books of casuistry encouraged mental reservation, equivocation, and denial of truth even with an oath, where it is supposed some good purpose may thereby be accomplished.¹ Thus does the Church of Rome render God's *Ninth Commandment* of none effect by her tradition. Finally, God forbids covetousness; but the Church of Rome, after nominally making covetousness a mortal sin, ends by shamefully practising what she forbids in other people. Her present lust of temporal power and sulking in consequence in the luxurious Vatican is before all the world a pure policy of covetousness. It is a policy to which Jesus was constantly tempted through the mistaken ambition of His countrymen; but which He resisted to the last, declaring that His Kingdom was not of this world. There is the less excuse, in such circumstances, for the Church and Pope, that claim the vice-gerency of Christ on earth, coveting the temporal power which others possess and which Jesus declined. And this covetousness in the head of the Church has its counterpart in the inferior clergy and the file of the Church of Rome, who seem to imagine it is quite lawful to covet the goods of other people, when they are to be dedicated to the Church. Thus is God's *Tenth Commandment* made of none effect by her tradition. It thus appears that the Church of Rome by her Jesuitical casuistry manages to set at nought the Ten Commandments; circulates a special morality for her devotees; and proposes

¹ Pascal's *Letters* as well as St Liguori will substantiate this.

to improve on the morality of the Sermon on the Mount.¹ How can this be otherwise when every priest is in the confessional made a judge of morals from whom there is no appeal; and who may absolve and minimise the most heinous offences according to his own caprice? Of this we shall have to speak more in detail in a subsequent chapter. But of one thing we may feel assured. Such variations in the standard of morals as Jesuit casuistry has introduced cannot be an evangelical tradition, for Jesus and His apostles could not thus stultify their previous deliverances. As "ecclesiastical traditions" their tendency has been and can only be to degrade those who have to accept of them. We have here the secret of the moral deterioration and decay of the Roman Catholic nations. Meanwhile, Protestantism declines to enlarge the rule of faith beyond the bounds of Holy Scripture. It is, so far as saving faith and morals are concerned, simple and sufficient. We conclude this chapter by a pertinent quotation from Chrysostom in his third homily on Lazarus:—"The Holy Spirit ordered these books (*i.e.* of the N.T.) to be composed by publicans, fishmongers, shepherds, and tentmakers; for this very end, that no illiterate person might be able to betake himself to this excuse, but that everything might be easy to be understood; that artisans, slaves, and old women might profit by them. For those whom the Holy Ghost deigned to endue with His gifts, did not perform their task like the philosophers. The philosophers involved their most useful lessons in enigmatic obscurity: but the apostles and prophets took a different course, speaking in a manner clear and manifest to all; so that every man, by himself, might be able to understand what they said by merely reading it. For who is there that cannot readily understand everything in the Gospels?"

¹ *The principles of the Jesuits developed in a series of extracts from their own authors*, by the Rev. Challis Paroissien, M.A., London, 1860, *passim*.

CHAPTER VIII

PROTESTANTISM PROMOTES MANLINESS OF CHARACTER THROUGH
CONCEDING TO EVERY MAN THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDG-
MENT.

§ 1. *Luther and the Freedom of the Christian Man*

THE Rule of Faith, as we have seen, is the Holy Scriptures. We have now to consider whether the individual is to be encouraged to interpret them. The quotation given from Chrysostom at the conclusion of last chapter will suffice to indicate the answer. The Gospel has been so presented in the Scriptures that the simplest souls can take it in. It may be hid from the wise and prudent; but it is revealed to babes (Matt. xi. 25). It will be well to look again at Luther as he embodies the Protestant spirit. In the year 1520 he wrote and published two of his "Primary Works," as they have been very properly called, his *Address to the Nobility of the German Nation* and his *Freedom of a Christian Man*. The former was the battle-cry to the noble *laymen* of the Church to come forward and fight for reformation. In the course of this treatise he mentions three walls of the Romanists which must be attacked and thrown down; and the second is the claim made by the Pope to be the sole interpreter of Holy Scripture. In connection with this claim he says:—"Christ Himself says: 'And they shall be all taught of God.' . . . Only consider the matter. They must needs acknowledge that there

are pious Christians among us, that have the true faith, spirit, understanding, word, and mind of Christ; why then should we reject their word and understanding, and follow a Pope who has neither understanding nor spirit? Surely this were to deny our whole faith and the Christian Church. . . . We are all priests, as I have said, and have all one faith, one gospel, one sacrament; how then should we not have the power of discerning and judging what is right or wrong in matters of faith? What becomes of St Paul's words: 'But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man' (1 Cor. ii. 15); and also, 'we having the same spirit of faith' (2 Cor. iv. 13). Why then should we not perceive as well as an unbelieving Pope, what agrees or disagrees with our faith? By these and many other texts we should gain courage and freedom, and should not let the spirit of liberty (as St Paul has it) be frightened away by the inventions of the popes; we shall boldly judge what they do and what they leave undone, by our own understanding of the Scriptures, and force them to follow the better understanding, and not their own. Did not Abraham in old days have to obey his Sarah, who was in stricter bondage to him than we are to anyone on earth? Thus too Balaam's ass was wiser than the prophet. If God spoke by an ass against a prophet, why should He not speak by a pious man against the Pope? Besides, St Paul withstood St Peter being in error (Gal. ii.). Therefore it behoves every Christian to aid the faith by understanding and defending it, and by condemning all errors."¹ This was followed up by the second little treatise mentioned above, "the pearl," as it has been called, of all the Reformer's writings, and which he sent with a most manly letter to the Pope upon *The*

¹ Cf. Luther's *Primary Works*, translated and edited by Buchheim and Wace, London, 1883, pp. 26, 27.

Freedom of the Christian Man. It is really the clarion call to the downtrodden serfs of Europe to enter into Christian liberty. He contends in it first that "a Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none," and secondly that "a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone." It was Protestantism finding and enfranchising the individual. "Let us," said Luther, "hold it for certain and firmly established that the soul can do without everything, except the Word of God, without which none at all of its wants are provided for. But, having the word, it is rich and wants for nothing; since that is the word of life, of truth, of light, of peace, of justification, of salvation, of joy, of liberty, of wisdom, of virtue, of grace, of glory, and of every good thing."¹

§ 2. *The Individual was largely ignored in the ages before Luther*

The individual was sacrificed first to the secular authority of "the world-king," and secondly to the spiritual authority of "the world-priest." The two ideas of a world-king and of a world-priest so dominated Europe that the individual seemed of no account, and the Emperor and the Pope all in all. The Reformation was the finding and the ennobling of the individual. "There is," says Mr Bryce in his *Holy Roman Empire*, "no event in history which has been represented in so great a variety of lights as the Reformation. It has been called a revolt of the laity against the clergy, or of the Teutonic races against the Italians, or of the kingdom of Europe against the universal monarchy of the popes. Some have seen in it only a burst of long-repressed anger at the luxury of the prelates and the manifold abuses of the ecclesiastical

¹ Cf. Luther's *Primary Works*, translated and edited by Buchheim and Wace, London, 1883, pp. 26, 27.

system; others a renewal of the youth of the Church by a return to primitive forms of doctrine. All these indeed it was; but it was also something more profound, and fraught with mightier consequences than any of them. It was in its essence the assertion of the principle of individuality; that is to say, of true spiritual freedom. Hitherto the personal consciousness had been a faint and broken reflection of the universal; obedience had been held the first of religious duties; truth had been conceived as a something external and positive, which the priesthood who were its stewards were to communicate to the passive layman, and whose saving virtue lay not in its being felt and known by him to be truth, but in a purely formal and unreasoning acceptance. The great principles which mediæval Christianity still cherished were obscured by the limited, rigid, almost sensuous forms which had been forced on them in times of ignorance and barbarism. That which was in its nature abstract, had been able to survive only by taking a concrete expression. The universal consciousness became the Visible Church; the Visible Church hardened into a government and degenerated into a hierarchy. Holiness of heart and life was sought by outward works, by penances and pilgrimages, by gifts to the poor and to the clergy, wherein there dwelt often little enough of a charitable mind. The presence of divine truth among men was symbolised under one aspect by the existence on earth of an infallible Vicar of God, the Pope; under another, by the reception of the present deity in the sacrifice of the mass; in a third, by the doctrine that the priest's power to remit sins and administer the sacrament, depended upon a transmission of miraculous gifts which can hardly be called other than physical. All this system of doctrine, which might, but for the position of the Church as a worldly and therefore obstructive power, have

expanded, renewed, and purified itself during the four centuries that had elapsed since its completion, and thus remained in harmony with the growing intelligence of mankind, was suddenly rent in pieces by the convulsion of the Reformation, and flung away by the more religious and more progressive peoples of Europe. That which was external and concrete, was in all things to be superseded by that which was inward and spiritual. It was proclaimed that the individual spirit, while it continued to mirror itself in the world-spirit, had nevertheless an independent existence as a centre of self-issuing force, and was to be in all things active rather than passive. Truth was no longer to be truth to the soul until it should have been by the soul recognised, and in some measure even created; but when so recognised and felt, it is able under the form of faith to transcend outward works and to transform the dogmas of the understanding; it becomes the living principle within each man's breast, infinite itself, and expressing itself infinitely through his thoughts and acts. He who as a spiritual being was delivered from the priest, and brought into direct relation with the Divinity, needed not, as heretofore, to be enrolled a member of a visible congregation of his fellows, that he might live a pure and useful life among them. Thus by the Reformation the Visible Church, as well as the priesthood lost that paramount importance which had hitherto belonged to it, and sank from being the depository of all religious tradition, the source and centre of religious life, the arbiter of eternal happiness or misery, into a mere association of Christian men, for the expression of mutual sympathy and the better attainment of certain common ends."¹ Protestantism, therefore, must be regarded as emphasizing the value of the individual. It regarded him, as Christ had

¹ Cf. Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, Oxford, 1864, pp. 132, 133.

Himself done, as more valuable than the whole material world.

§ 3. *The Right of Private Judgment—What it means*

This brings us to a consideration of what this right of private judgment, upon which Protestantism insists, really means. If we believed the Romanists, it is the exercise of mere caprice, the right to think just as we please, a mere licence to individual prejudice. A concrete example of the misconception may be taken from the deliverance of Cardinal Newman on the comparative purity of married Protestant clergymen and celibate Roman Catholic priests. He says : "Though it is impossible to bring the matter fairly to an issue (*i.e.* there are no statistics on a wide scale available), yet for that very reason I have as much a right to my opinion as another to his, when I state my deliberate conviction that there are, to say the least, as many offences against the marriage vow among Protestant ministers as there are against the vow of celibacy among Catholic Priests."¹ Now, what right had Newman to entertain and publish such an opinion ? He had no evidence at hand to justify it ; it was a malignant libel. The right was simply the *legal* right, but *moral* right he had none. The Law does not propose to interfere with a man entertaining any opinion he pleases, so long as he does not interfere with a fellow-citizen's rights. As Archdeacon Hare very properly remarks : "A *legal right* doubtless a man has to think that the moon is made of green cheese ; inasmuch as the law has never prohibited such an opinion, and will not punish him for holding it, unless perhaps by a strait waistcoat. But morally no man has a *right* to any opinion, except it agree with the truth, or with the most correct estimate of

¹ Quoted by Archdeacon Hare in his *Contest with Rome*, second edition, Cambridge, 1856, p. 255.

the truth he can frame. *Right* has nothing to do with the matter. We have no *right*, except to think rightly; and this right is also a duty, imposed upon every being endowed with the faculty of thinking by his indefensible allegiance to truth.”¹ We will now be able to appreciate what the right of private judgment means. It is not the right to act in any arbitrary and prejudiced spirit. It is simply the right to sit in judgment upon the evidence which Truth presents upon any subject. In this matter of Holy Scripture and Christian Doctrine, it is the right to decide upon the plain meaning of Scripture and upon the consistency of alleged doctrine with it. It is the right to use the Scriptures as God has provided them, a revelation not for experts alone, but for the common people. The exercise of such a right is over and over again commended in Holy Scripture. Christ asked His contemporaries with sorrowful indignation, “Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?” (Luke xii. 57). His apostles applauded the Bereans because they “searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so” (Acts xvii. 11). St Paul exhorted men to “prove all things”; and then to “hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. v. 21). So that private judgment need frighten no one. It is simply the exercise of a right which, as reasonable beings, we should insist upon, of thinking accurately for ourselves.²

§ 4. *Individualism has been decried because individual convictions have been underestimated*

Individualism has been put under the ban of the Church of Rome, because it has led men in the exercise of their judgment to question her claims. The individual is of no

¹ *Ibid.* p. 225.

² *Cf.* Prof. Archer Butler's *Letters on Romanism*, Cambridge, 1858, pp. 157, 158.

more value to the Church of Rome than he was in the Middle Ages. Of her spirit we may say, adapting the words of Tennyson—

“The individual withers while the *Church* is more and more.”

The significant thing, moreover, is that the High Church party has caught the infection and indulges in even as strong condemnation of Individualism as any Romanist can. Canon Gore, for example, considers it “a point outside controversy that the Bible does not stand alone as the rule of faith, anyone being permitted to interpret it according to his or her isolated judgment.” “The Church,” he maintains, “is the basis upon which the human witness to the revealed truth ultimately rests.” And “private judgment” must be confronted constantly by “the Catholic judgment” to which it is expected to conform.¹ And the late Rev. Aubrey L. Moore declares “The last half century has seen the transition from Protestantism to Catholicism by which we do not mean the abandonment of the principles of the English Reformation, but a change in our way of looking at things. People who have least sympathy with the change have most difficulty in explaining, what they look upon not as a ‘survival,’ but as a sudden recrudescence of mediævalism. Here are men in the nineteenth century actually expressing a belief in a divine society and a supernatural presence in our midst, a brotherhood in which men become members of an organic whole by sharing in a common life, a service of man which is the natural and spontaneous outcome of the service of God. It is no mere exchange of one set of opinions for another. It claims to be a breathing of new life into old truths, the recovery of a rightful heritage. It is very hard to explain it as a mere retreat, or a refusal to face unpleasant facts, for

¹ Cf. *Roman Catholic Claims*, *ut supra*, pp. 60, 73,

it is earnest, vigorous, hopeful, aggressive. It proclaims war against individualism; it is even claimed as socialistic; it is in touch with every new movement for the good of man; and yet at the heart of all it holds clear and true to the Incarnation and the Sacraments. Its ideal is unity, the unity of a visible organized society which is as far removed from the mechanical uniformity of Rome or Geneva as from the formulated disunion of modern Congregationalism.”¹ We shall have reason in another chapter to criticise certain prevailing views about the visible church which seem quite unwarranted. Meanwhile it is well here to point out that the outcry against Individualism is largely due to an underestimate of the force of individual conviction. It may be trusted to manifest itself fitly in the long run. The path it must tread is that of experience; and the only way to serve the interests of truth is to encourage every man to think for himself, and to allow no other man, and not even a historic Church to do his thinking for him. The “catholic judgment” of which Canon Gore speaks so reverentially, is often very hard to reach. The canon of Vincent of Lerins about what has been held always and everywhere and by everybody is of very limited application. Individuals must take for granted nothing which they can verify for themselves. This is the condition of making the truth a personal possession. And when the truth has taken hold of men’s minds and hearts, it may be trusted to manifest itself in ways that are at least reasonable, and not amenable in any large degree to the charge of self-will.

§ 5. *Manliness has been greatly promoted by the Protestant Exercise of Private Judgment*

When a man is encouraged to think for himself, to study Scripture at first hand and not in fear of infallible

¹ Cf. *Science and the Faith*, second edition, 1889, pp. xxxiv.-v.

interpreters, to study doctrine to see whether it be scriptural or the reverse, to study Church questions to see what side the evidence compels him to take, his whole being is the better of it. His manliness is reinforced. He can act intelligently. He knows the truth and prizes his inheritance. Undoubtedly, Protestantism has lifted the laity into an acquaintance with Biblical truth and Church questions of the most important character. The education has been only started. Many things, as we shall see afterwards, have militated and do still militate against it. But a day is surely coming when the individual will reach his rights in Church as well as State, and not be encouraged to assume that passive attitude, which has been the temptation of ecclesiastics in all ages. God has not, as we hope to show, set up a judgment-seat in the Church in the shape of the confessional, to which individuals are bound to come that they may have their sins acknowledged and absolved; but He has set up a judgment-seat in each individual soul, where He expects that not only sins but all the interests of men shall be considered and disposed of by the help of Holy Scripture and of the Holy Spirit. "Such private judgment" may be trusted to work out ultimately God's righteous ends.

CHAPTER IX

PROTESTANTISM IDEALISING THE "CATHOLIC CHURCH"

§ 1. *The "Holy Catholic Church" an object of Faith with the Reformers*

THE Church of Rome posed in the sixteenth century as "the holy Catholic Church." If proof was asked, she pointed to her antiquity, and that she had been able to vanquish all her enemies; to her ubiquity, sending emissaries into all accessible lands; and to her holiness, appropriating "dead saints" who never dreamed of the papal power as well as those who bowed to it, and pointing to living saints in the persons of monks and nuns with their abundant merits. On these grounds she maintained that she was "the holy Catholic Church," out of which there could be no salvation. Now it is upon this all important doctrine of the Church that Romanism in all its forms must be met and vanquished. We have already seen that Luther was by nature and grace the determined foe of all shams. And so he became convinced that the attributes of a really holy and Catholic Church were not visible, at least to the naked eye, in the Church of Rome. With a record like hers, the wonder was that she could put forward such a claim! Accordingly, he began to question this "visibility" of the Church, on which, for obvious purposes, so much emphasis was laid. He turned to the ancient Creeds, and found there "the holy Catholic Church" put down as an article of *faith*; it must, he contended, be "invisible," else the Creed would declare it a

matter of *sight*; and so he was led to the recognised Protestant doctrine of the "invisibility" of "the holy Catholic Church." An interesting passage occurs in his well-known *Commentary on the Galatians*, which will set this in its true light. After ridiculing the sainthood of "those which lurk in caves and dens, which make their bodies lean with fasting, which wear hair, and do other like things, with this persuasion and trust that they shall have some singular reward in heaven above all other Christians," he goes on to contend from Gal. v. 19 that all believers are "called to be saints" and are in Christ Jesus to be so regarded. "Therefore we rightly confess, in the articles of our belief, that we believe there is a holy Church; for it is invisible, dwelling in spirit in a place that none can attain unto, and therefore her holiness cannot be seen; for God doth so hide and cover her with infirmities, with sins, with errors, with divers forms of the Cross and offences, that according to the judgment of reason it is nowhere to be seen. They that are ignorant of this, when they see the infirmities and sins of those which are baptized, which have the word and believe it, are by and by offended, and judge them not to pertain to the Church; and in the meanwhile they dream that the hermits, the monks, and such other shavelings, are the Church, which honour God with their lips, and worship Him in vain, because they followed not the Word of God, but the doctrines and commandments of men, and teach others to do the same. And because they do certain superstitious and monstrous works, which carnal reason magnifieth and highly esteemeth, therefore they judge them only to be saints, and to be the Church; and, in so doing, they change and turn this article of faith clean contrary, 'I believe that there is a holy Church,' &c.; and in the stead of this word [I believe] they put in [I see]." ¹

¹ Middleton's Edition, London, 1864, pp. 431, 432.

In this contention Luther was followed by the other Reformers, and among these by Calvin who says in his *Institutes*, "In order to embrace the unity of the Church in this manner, it is unnecessary, as we have observed, to see the Church with our eyes, or feel it with our hands; on the contrary, from its being an object of faith, we are taught that it is no less to be considered as existing, when it escapes our observation, than if it were evident to our eyes."¹ What was "the Holy Catholic Church," then, in the doctrine of the Reformers? For convenience and succinctness of statement we shall take what is given by Hall's *Harmony* as the Article of the Confession of Scotland:—"As we believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so do we most constantly believe that from the beginning there hath been, and now is, and to the end of the world shall be; one Church, Matt. xxviii. 20, that is to say, a company and multitude of men, chosen of God, Ephes. i. 4, who rightly worship and embrace Him by true faith in Christ Jesus; who is the only Head of the same Church; Col. i. 18, which also is the body and spouse of Christ Jesus; Ephes. v. 23-32, which Church is Catholic, that is, universal, because it containeth the elect of all ages, of all realms, nations, and tongues, Apoc. vii. 9, be they of the Jews, or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion and society with God the Father, and with His Son Christ Jesus, through the sanctification of His Holy Spirit; and therefore it is called the Communion, not of profane persons, but of saints, who, as citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem, Ephes. ii. 19, have the fruition of the most inestimable benefits, to wit, of one God, one Lord Jesus, one faith, and one baptism, Ephes. iv. 4-6, out of the which Church there is neither life nor eternal felicity. And therefore we utterly abhor the blasphemy of those that

¹ Cf. Book iv. chap. i. § 3.

affirm that men which live according to equity and justice shall be saved, what religion soever they have professed. For as without Christ Jesus there is neither life nor salvation, John iii. 36, so shall there none be participant thereof but such as the Father hath given unto His Son Christ Jesus, and those that in time come unto Him, avow His doctrine and believe in Him (we comprehend the children with the faithful parents, Acts ii. 39). This Church is invisible, known only to God, who alone knoweth whom He hath chosen, and comprehendeth as well (it is said) the elect that be departed, commonly called the Church Triumphant, as those that yet live and fight against sin and Satan, and shall live hereafter." Protestantism will thus be seen to have before its faith an *ideal Church*, "the blessed company of all faithful people," who not only have lived, or are now living on the earth, but also who will live down to the end of time! In this ideal Church, which is only in process of being realised, we believe as "the holy Catholic Church." We are thus brought into sympathy with all the faithful departed, and with the saints now living on the earth by whatever name they may be called, and with all who shall believe through their testimony down to the last moment of departing time!

§ 2. *All Saints*

It may be worth while quoting here Dr Hatch's melodious poem entitled "All Saints" as conveying part of the great idea.

"Saints of the early dawn of Christ,
 Saints of imperial Rome,
 Saints of the cloistered Middle Age,
 Saints of the modern home;
 Saints of the soft and sunny East,
 Saints of the frozen seas;
 Saints of the isles that wave their palms
 In the far Antipodes;

Saints of the marts and busy streets,
 Saints of the squalid lanes,
 Saints of the silent solitudes,
 Of the prairies and the plains ;
 Saints who were wafted to the skies
 In the torment robe of flame ;
 Saints who have graven on men's thoughts
 A monumental name ;
 Come, from the endless peace that spreads
 Over the glassy sea ;
 Come, from the choir with harps of gold,
 Harping their melody ;
 Come, from the home of holiest hope,
 Under the altar-throne ;
 Come, from the depths where the angels see
 One awful Face alone ;
 Come, from the heights where the Mount of God
 Burns like a burnished gem ;
 Come, from the star-paved terraces
 Of the New Jerusalem ;
 Come, for we fain would hear the notes
 Of your sweet celestial hymn,
 And we fain would know what look is theirs
 Who look on the Seraphim ;
 Come, for our faith is waning faint,
 And the lamp of love burns low ;
 Come to these lower heavens, and shine,
 That we may see and know ;
 Come, for the flash of a moment's space,
 With your snowy wings outspread,
 O God-lit cloud of witnesses,
 Souls of the sainted dead." ¹

§ 3. *How such an Ideal helps us*

Now there can be no doubt that such a vision as Dr Hatch's poem brings before us, or Bishop How's kindred poem, "For all the saints who from their labours rest," must have an uplifting effect upon the pensive spirit. We see that, if we believe, we belong to a great "Communion,"

¹ Cf. Nicoll's *Songs of Rest*, new edition, 1893, p. 31.

which is being brought from all ages and from all lands to dwell with God in His holy and eternal city. As we come to this "Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the innumerable host of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel," we feel ennobled and emancipated by associating, even in thought, with such an incomparable company (Heb. xii. 22-24, R.V.). One spirit pervades the whole community. One king rules over all. The best out of all ages and all lands are with us in the holy mount. Such an ideal church makes us purer and nobler as we contemplate it. We have already seen the privilege and duty of following "the experimental method" in this matter of religion. This ideal, invisible church is strictly within the compass of this method. For when we have got our facts, we then begin to form "working hypotheses" to help us to understand the facts, and then we proceed to verify these, if possible, by experiment. The second step in this experimental method is what we may call *idealising*. We get a certain vision in our "chambers of imagery," which embodies the facts in certain orderly forms, and we experiment according to these ideals. It will accordingly be seen that the ideal church comes to help us in our religious experiment. We are encouraged to realise as far as possible the ideal of a "holy Catholic Church," by cultivating holiness ourselves, and by urging a higher Christian life on other people. We purify ourselves as our Master is pure, in hope of walking more worthy of the great "Communion of Saints" to which, as believers, we belong. The broadest possible spirit characterises us. The Christian brotherhood is as broad

in our view as the electing love of God, and we take in the entire panorama of expiring time both in our faith and hope. We dare not be sectarian bigots in presence of God's problem of a "holy Catholic Church," which He is solving patiently down the Christian centuries! Truly, by such a doctrine of the Church we have ascended and are sitting in heavenly places with Christ, the Church's Head and King! (Eph. ii. 6).

§ 4. *The Serious Mistake of attributing to a Visible Organisation what really belongs to the Invisible*

But this idealising of the Catholic Church, to which enlightened Protestantism is committed, seems too great an effort for partisans. Deluded by the idea that because an organisation is old, it is never going to vanish away, the partisans of the Church of Rome insist that she must be the Church against which, according to God's promise, the gates of Hades is never going to prevail. The historic imagination comes to reinforce the sectarian spirit. Because the history of the Church of Rome "joins together two great ages of human civilisation"; because "no other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre"; because "the proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of the supreme Pontiffs"; because "she saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world"; she must be the elect "Catholic Church," against which no opposition is going to prevail. Such is the argument by which even a historian like Lord Macaulay can be deluded. But to the faith of Protestantism it does not matter much that a Macaulay could say, "We feel no assurance that she (the

Church of Rome) is not destined to see the end of them all." ¹ For "this argument from history requires discrimination. Mere age," says a writer, "makes out nothing decisive for a religion. Religions in general are apt to be long-lived, longer-lived than civil politics. Republics supplant Empires, and Empires Republics much more easily and much oftener than one religion supplants another. The Osiris worship of Egypt, the Sabæanism of Mesopotamia, the Baal worship of Phœnicia, the mythologies of Greece and Rome, all lasted many centuries, and, while they lasted, might have made an argument of their longevity. But they are all dead now, and out of the way far enough." ² It will consequently not do to argue that because the Church of Rome has lasted long she is going to last for ever, and must be the Church to which the promise was made that the gates of Hades would not prevail against her. As a matter of fact, Scripture has indicated and history has confirmed the removal of local churches because of their unfaithfulness. In the apocalyptic vision Jesus, the sovereign Ruler in the Church, threatens to remove the candlestick out of his place at Ephesus unless the church there repented (Rev. ii. 5), and we know that the Churches in Asia Minor, referred to in the Apocalypse, have long since ceased to exist. But "the Church" abides. So that the promise cannot be localised as the sectarians desire. What Jesus has promised is simply a "historical existence" to a "Christian community which, founded at Pentecost, shall stand amidst the lapse of ages, unshaken by the ravages which death may make on its particular, successive members." ³ Protestantism is not going consequently to fall into the fallacy of supposing that the Church of

¹ Cf. Macaulay's *Essays*, Vol. ii., on *Ranke's History of the Popes*.

² Cf. Dr Hitchcock's *Eternal Atonement*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1888, pp. 193, 194.

³ Cf. Griffith on *The Apostles' Creed*, London, 1842, pp. 257, 258.

Rome is necessarily the "holy Catholic Church" because she has had a long lease of life, and will naturally die hard.

Before we can admit the necessary "visibility" of the Catholic Church, we must be satisfied not only about the divine promise, but also about the divine fulfilment. We have seen that the promise does not apply to any such local organisation as that of Rome. We may now see that this particular Church has not fulfilled the divine idea. It has not been "holy" in any broad or real sense. It has indeed endeavoured to make of "holiness" mere outward separation, and so to monopolise the term as applicable only to the Pharisaic churchmanship which tells better men from time to time to stand aside for "we have orders you do not possess, and are in consequence holier than you." The holiness must be something deeper than this pitiful particularism. The Church of Rome has had no such monopoly of sanctity as to entitle her to assume the title of "holy Church." In Luther's time it was, he tells us, "a very sink and puddle of all vices and abominations." We dare not, therefore, allow the claim that she is the holy Church. Nor again can we admit that a local Church which embodies a locality in its very title is the "Catholic" or universal Church. She may send her emissaries forth to all accessible lands, and have representatives in all accessible quarters, and yet her subordination of all to her narrow local ideas, her subordination of all to what is on careful analysis a mere "Italian Mission," completely sets aside this claim of Catholicity. To frighten men with the belated idea that it is necessary for eternal salvation to be subject to the sovereign Pontiff at Rome, is of itself sufficient to annihilate all pretensions to Catholicity. No such condition could ever be connected with a universal Church. A Church, which can only unchurch men and paralyse them, is but a pitiful caricature of that Jerusalem from above which is intended,

in a spirit of celestial *comprehensiveness*, to be "the mother of us all."

§ 5. *The Exaggeration of Representing any Visible Church as an extension of the Incarnation*

It will be well here to dispose of a kindred claim which, since the days of Möhler's *Symbolik*, has been finding favour with a certain school of churchmen, that a visible Catholic Church is an extension of our Lord's Incarnation. The unity between Christ and His mystic spouse the Church is, we are assured, so profound and real that we are asked to take the concrete, visible Church as the continuation of the Incarnation of God. The blasphemy of the claim has not, we think, been realised. It is in reality the *apotheosis* of the *Church*! Now, if the visible Church claiming such a prerogative were Christ-like in spirit and in temper, if she were "meek and lowly" as the Master was, if she were publishing the claim in hope of becoming like Him "the servant of all," it might be entertained as a "working hypothesis." But when the claim is put forth to bolster up a supremacy, it can only be rejected as untenable. No good end can be served by representing any visible organisation as being what we know it is *not*, an embodiment of the Spirit of Christ, a material presentation of His mind and will! No wonder that Möhler's contention has been repudiated by members of his own Church as savouring of Pantheism. The wonder is that a school of English churchmen should have insisted on the idea. Can any good come of calling a Society, which deliberately unchurches men at least as learned and as holy as themselves, a "Divine Society" and an "extension of the Incarnation"?¹ Is this the remedy for that Individualism which is so feared in Protestantism?

¹ Cf. Canon Gore's insinuation that Nonconformity is organised "self-will," and that the Reformation furnished us with "great Presbyterian schisms." Cf. *Roman Catholic Claims*, n. p. 23; p. 127.

Truth is never served by exaggeration like this. Instead of insisting on being a material extension of the Incarnation, these Churches would do well in penitence to lament how unlike the Master they are in spirit, and out of penitence would come progress and reform.¹ We could understand men taking up the position that the Church *ought* to be an extension of the Incarnation; *ought* to be as Jesus was in the world; *ought* to remind mankind at every turn of the spirit and aim of the Master. But to be assured that the "Visible Church" actually incarnates God before men is a gross misrepresentation of facts. Such hollow pretension can do nothing but hinder the coming of that "kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

§ 6. *The ideal and invisible Catholic Church is a truer stimulus to the individual*

There is a danger in Individualism, though we believe it has been exaggerated for sectarian purposes. A person who has through regeneration, justification, and assurance of faith reached the happy consciousness of being "accepted in the beloved" and destined to persevere unto life eternal, may be tempted to rest for a little in his isolation. But the remedy for this does not lie in what is called the "discipline of the Church," but in the ideals suggested by the grand conception of a "holy Catholic Church." Protestantism holds before men the fact that we belong to a great "Communion of Saints" which embraces all lands, all ages, all developments of the race. This great "Communion of Saints" constitutes an organic whole, so that even the sainted dead in the abodes of peace cannot be perfected without us and others as their successors and followers.

¹ Cf. Aubrey L. Moore's *Science and the Faith*, *ut supra*, p. 35; *Lux Mundi*, Essay ix. on "The Church"; Strong's *Manual of Theology*, 1892, p. 332, etc.; Strong's *Christian Ethics*, new edition, 1897, p. 334.

(Heb. xi. 40). We are bound, in consequence, to consider our duty to this great brotherhood of elect saints. We cannot live apart from them. The great brotherhood is infectious. It lifts us up into historic associations which are holy and stimulating in the highest degree. It throws us forward with hope into every enterprise which may help to realise the great idea. We will gladly be members of local and visible Churches organised on Christian principles and calculated to carry forward the great ideas which are presented to our faith in the holy Catholic Church. In no sectarian spirit, but in that of broadest sympathy with the great world-embracing brotherhood, we make our individuality and sterling convictions tributary to the general weal.

§ 7. *"Visible" Churches are Communities of Christian men organised on the same principles and for the same ends as the ideal Catholic Church*

Now while, as we have seen, Scripture contemplates an ideal Church which survives the lapse of ages, and against which even the gates of Hades shall not be permitted to prevail, it also presents to us local and visible Churches, charged with realising the divine ideas. The first of these local Churches in the present dispensation was the Church at Jerusalem. Here, at Pentecost, the organisation of the Church began. We may learn the nature of Church organisation from the *Acts of the Apostles*. By the preaching of the gospel Peter and the eleven "called" a Church out of an unbelieving world, so effectually called men on that occasion that three thousand responded on the spot, cried out "What must we do to be saved?" and were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; and ere the day of Pentecost ended there was a Christian and visible Church at Jerusalem, embracing no less than three thousand souls. These thousands at once began to meet together for

public worship, and for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and for fellowship. The Lord was Himself in their midst as their invisible King. His authority was recognised in all the "assemblies of the saints." The local Church was thus a brotherhood in the Lord, where they associated for edification, to study the mind of their Heavenly Master, and be inspired by His Spirit. And although the Apostles were the "ruling spirits" in the primitive organisation, it was in the Spirit of Him who had expressly said to them, "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest amongst you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Matt. xxiii. 8-12). The primitive converts in their innocency manifestly imagined that they would be allowed to settle down peacefully in Jerusalem and might have in consequence all things in common. They were going to be a great "family of God," where everything belonged to everyone. But God's grander purposes could not be thus accomplished. The commune becomes unwieldy and unmanageable. "Deacons" are appointed by the congregation to manage the temporal affairs. Then persecution comes to scatter the congregation and secure the establishment of other Churches. The inspired men go everywhere preaching the word and fulfilling their marching orders to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"; "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mark xvi. 15; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20)

For the preaching of the word, for the celebration of the

sacraments, for mutual counsel and edification these primitive disciples gathered together, and so became visible churches. They realised that they were members one of another. Persecution and tribulation welded them into one. They organised themselves as Christ's subjects and saints, recognising Him as Head and King, and His Spirit as their great inspiring force, and His aim as their great idea. The visible churches were honest efforts to realise at various centres the principles and ends of the great invisible church which was steadily growing as God's elect. Thus we are distinctly taught in the *Acts of the Apostles* "how as opportunity was afforded, by God's providence for spreading the Gospel through Judea and into heathen lands, other communities, or societies of Christians were formed on the same principles and for the same ends with that first community, that model school as it were, which the apostles had established in Jerusalem. So that the whole multitude of Christians who were at first comprehended within the narrow limits of the sacred city; and concerning whom St Luke says (ii. 47) 'the Lord added to the *Church*,' i.e. the single body of disciples at Jerusalem, 'daily such as should be saved'; soon began to be spoken of as spread through many distinct societies. Whence St Luke speaks of 'the *churches* throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria' (Acts ix. 31); and St Paul of 'the *churches* of God which in Judea were in Christ Jesus' (1 Thess. ii. 14); and again, when he says to the Romans, 'to whom all the *churches* of the Gentiles give thanks' (Rom. xvi. 4). Nay, and in this same chapter (v. 16), though writing from only a single city, Corinth, he adds, 'the *churches* of Christ salute you.' The grand idea which had been placed before the apostles by our blessed Lord, and the first working of which was exhibited among the Christians of Jerusalem, was acted upon wherever a number of men were turned

unto the Lord; and everywhere not only was truth preached and individual souls were saved, but *organized communities* were formed, connected with each other not by artificial outward ties, but by inward sympathy of principle and object, not by an enforced uniformity but by a spontaneous unanimity, not by means of a *subordination* established by authority but by means of a co-ordination kept up by mutual reverence and love; related to each other, not so much as *daughter* churches, but rather as *sister* communities in the Lord.”¹

§ 8. *The ideal always in advance of the real, till the church militant becomes the church triumphant*

We have seen how the visible and local churches came into existence at and after Pentecost. They were organised to make the ideal a reality, as far as this was possible. And so as Christ is King in the “Holy Catholic Church,” for He is expressly called “King of Saints,” the assembly of the saints, when it will be gathered into one in heaven at the last, will be a great organised community, pervaded by His Spirit, and obedient unto His every call. It is to this the assemblies of saints on earth are becoming gradually conformed. Many things prevent the perfect response to the Master’s will which should be given; but the perfect ideal held before us in the holy Catholic Church will stimulate us to realise more and more completely the will of our Lord. We follow after our “high calling.” We seek to “apprehend that for which we have been apprehended in Christ Jesus” (Phil. iii. 12-14). And so the militant church on earth will grow in grace, until it merges into the triumphant church of heaven.

¹ Cf. Griffith, *ut supra*, pp. 273-4.

CHAPTER X

PROTESTANTISM AND THE POWER OF THE KEYS

§ 1. *The Question of Church Authority*

WE have found that the "holy Catholic Church" is rightly regarded by Protestantism as an object of *Faith*. It is an ideal church in process of realisation, composed of God's saints of every age and every country, so comprehensive in character that every saved soul will be found within it. We have also found that visible and local churches are simply efforts to realise with more or less success the divine ideas as given in the great and "holy Catholic Church." We have now to consider with care the nature of authority in the visible churches which are organised in the good providence of God. And this will be best understood by studying the "power of the keys."

There are three passages in the Gospels upon which the power of the keys is based, and to these we shall now turn. The first is Matt. xvi. 18-19. "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (R.V.). The second passage is Matt. xviii. 15-20. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone; if he hear thee, thou hast gained

thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church" [marg. "congregation"]; "and if he refuse to hear the church" [or "congregation"] "also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican. Verily I say unto you, what things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (R.V.). The third and last passage is in John xx. 22-23. "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (R.V.).

Now the first clear truth regarding authority in the church is, in the light of these passages, this, its source is Christ Himself! He is the ever-present though unseen Head and King of His Church. It is lack of faith to regard Him as ever absent from the assembly of His saints. Even when only two or three are met together in His name, He is in the midst of them, the King in His church-council. It would save an immensity of misunderstanding if this presence of the Lord Himself were always realised. There would in such a case be no desire to place usurpers in His room. The Church has no Head but Christ. He is ever present with His assembled people, and will be according to His promise to the very end of the age. The "headship of Christ," therefore, is a first truth in the organisation of the Church.

The second truth is that "the power of the keys," whatever this may be, was given to the Church as well as to Peter and the other apostles. This was a cardinal principle with Luther. He maintained that the power of the keys belonged to the whole people. For example, in his *Resolutio* he affirms that the power of the keys belongs not to the Pope, but to the Church, and that the Church is not the hierarchy, but the communion of saints. The ministry, he maintains, exercises the power in the name of the Church.¹ And a study of the above proof passages will show that Luther is right. The delegated power is evidently made over to the Church, and Peter and the other apostles were to exercise it in the name of the Church.

§ 2. "*The Kingdom of Heaven*" which the keys are to open
is the visible Church

A good deal of misconception has arisen through want of attention to the terms employed in bestowing the power of the keys. St Peter has been supposed by his champions to be standing at the gate of heaven itself deciding who is to be admitted and who are to be kept out. And a strange confusion has arisen of things present and things to come through inattention to the words of Scripture. An acute writer upon this very subject has called attention to the overlooked fact that "the kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God" are *not* synonymous terms. When an induction of the Gospel passages is made it will be found that "the kingdom of heaven" means the "visible church" composed of genuine professors and also of false professors, of good and of bad, who cannot be thoroughly separated until the Church militant merges into the Church triumphant. "The kingdom of God," on the other hand, will be found to

¹ Cf. Jacobs' *Martin Luther*, *ut supra*, pp. 132, 135, 378, 383.

mean "the reign of God" in real earnest, and so a synonym of the "invisible Church" ideally perfect and one day to be really so.¹

Assuming then that this is the true account of these all-important terms, it is surely significant to notice that to St Peter and the other apostles and the Church no key is committed either to "heaven" or to "the kingdom of God," but only to the "kingdom of heaven." Christ never intended to give to men any authority to open or shut heaven to their fellows, nor to manipulate the "invisible church," that true "kingdom of God" where He is recognised as supreme. The delegated authority was simply in connection with the "visible church" on earth, the conditions of church membership being determined by the Church acting through its officers. "When Christ, therefore, says to Peter, 'I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, it is,' says the writer already referred to, "a very different thing from what it would have been if He had said 'I give unto thee the keys of heaven,' or the keys 'of the kingdom of God.' It is the same as if He had said 'I give unto thee the power of excluding from or admitting to the membership of that society on earth whose members profess to be heaven-bound; that society, whose members have obeyed (some in the inward heart and some only in outward form) my call, 'Come after me!' that society which I have compared to 'ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five were foolish;' that society which I have spoken of as a net, into which bad and good are gathered; that society which I have likened to a marriage feast, where the merely called and the truly chosen may be seen sitting side by side together. 'I give you the keys of that kingdom, of that company, power to exclude from or admit to

¹ Cf. *The Forgiveness of Sins by God and by Man*, by the Rev. William Simpson, of Queenstown, Belfast, 1869, p. 11.

its membership.' And when he adds, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,' it is obviously the same as if He had said, 'I will ratify in heaven whatever you do on earth, regarding the exclusion from or admission to the membership of this community.'"¹

§ 3. *St Peter's action as given in the Acts of the Apostles sustains this interpretation*

That this view of the power of the keys is the correct one will be seen by consulting the *Acts of the Apostles*. If St Peter had the primacy claimed for him, he must surely have asserted himself when associated with the other apostles. But all he did was to take the chief share in the preaching on the day of Pentecost. As an impulsive, impressive preacher he naturally occupied a first place on that momentous day. But he never insisted then or afterwards on having any authority over his brethren. Nay more, he takes in a kindly spirit expostulation when Paul and others thought he deserved it.

Moreover, if St Peter had imagined he was himself "the rock" on which the Church was to be built, he would surely have included this in his preaching of the Gospel; but so far from doing so, his discourses are a single-minded exaltation of Christ as the only Saviour of sinners. "Neither is there salvation," he declared, "in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). It is idle in the face of self-forgetful conduct like this to force upon Peter for party purposes honours which he never suspected he possessed.

Then as to the "remission of sins," which has been made so much of, we have Peter's action on the day of

¹ Cf. Simpson, *ut supra*, pp. 15-16.

Pentecost throwing a flood of light upon the whole subject. For after his discourse upon the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, when the multitude were pricked in their heart and cried out to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts ii. 37-39). Now we have here to notice what Peter lays down as the terms of admission into the kingdom of heaven, the new society he and the apostles are organising in Jerusalem. He declares that if they repent and are baptized they may accept of this as an assurance of the forgiveness of their sins, and they shall receive over and above the gift of the Holy Ghost. The "remission of sins" is thus dispensed publicly and declaratively as part of the preaching of the Gospel. "What is the very first direction," said the late Prebendary Griffith, "that St Peter gives to the awakened multitude when they cried out saying 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' 'Repent, and *be baptized* every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins.*' Not only, 'Repent,' observe, which was needful for their personal deliverance from the impending wrath; but, 'Repent *and be baptized*'—unite yourselves by a solemn, public ordinance to our society; take the sacramental oath of enlistment in our little band of followers of Jesus; and thus distinguishing yourselves from the untoward generation round you, step into the sacred sphere of God's own 'saved ones,' wherein there is remission of sins, by the blood of Christ, and peace, and joy, and hope through the gift of the Holy Ghost. 'And they that gladly received the word were

baptized; and the same day there were added to them,' *i.e.* to the community of Christians already organised, 'about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and *fellowship*'—not doctrine merely, feeding on the truths they taught; but also *fellowship*, acting as lively members of the community over which they ruled—'and in breaking of bread and in prayers'—in the participation, with that community, of those social meals of brotherly affection at which the whole body of the faithful gratefully commemorated the death and passion of their Head."¹ No wonder in such circumstances that Luther maintained the power of the keys was authority to teach and not merely to absolve. "A pastor," he said, "exercises the office of the keys, baptizes, preaches, administers the sacrament, and does other offices, whereby he serves the congregation, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the congregation, which has entrusted the keys to him, even though he be a rascal. For if he do this instead of the congregation, the Church does it. . . . The key of binding and loosing is the authority to teach, and not only to absolve."² It is this declarative character of the absolution which has been embodied in the English Prayer-book, where the pronouncement is made in the well-known terms:—"Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy gospel." It was this which Mr Robertson of Brighton emphasized so powerfully, as the true corrective

¹ Cf. Griffith on *The Apostles' Creed*, *ut supra*, p. 261.

² On St Peter and St Paul's Day (1526), *Werke* xv. pp. 433, 434.

of the confessional which he lamented was once more getting into vogue in England. "That which we thought dead," he said, "is alive again, and not likely, it seems, to die. Recent revelations have shown that confession is daily made in the country whose natural manners are most against it; private absolution asked by Englishmen and given by English priests." Accordingly, he urges that the desire for absolution is not to be met with mere negative denouncement of the confessional, but by positive declarations of pardon as part of the preaching office. "What is forgiveness?" he asks. "It is God reconciled to us. What is absolution? It is the authoritative declaration that God is reconciled. Authoritative: that is a real power of conveying a sense and feeling of forgiveness. . . . Settle it in your minds, the absolving power is the central secret of the Gospel. Salvation is unconditional, not an offer, but a *Gift*; not clogged with conditions, but free as the air we breathe. God welcomes back the prodigal. God loves without money and without price."¹

§ 4. *Auricular Confession Based on Doubt of the Publicly Conveyed Absolution*

We have just seen that, in the spirit of St Peter at the Pentecost, a public absolution is to be conveyed in connection with the preaching of the Gospel. In fact, as Mr Robertson maintained, it is in this absolving power we find "the central secret of the Gospel." And great Evangelists are persons who convey through their assurance of God's redemptive love an assurance of forgiveness unto their faithful hearers. If the public message of mercy were believed, as it ought to be, there would be no craving for the private assurances associated with auricular confession.

¹ Cf. *Sermons Preached at Brighton*, third series, eighth edition, Sermon on "Absolution."

The confessional from the sinner's standpoint is an acknowledgment of *doubt* regarding the *public* offer of the Gospel. The general declaration of God's readiness to forgive is not enough; the doubting soul demands a private and confidential assurance of the divine forgiveness. Now the point we would here urge is whether an institution which owes its existence to *culpable unbelief* ought to be encouraged? Should souls, who will not believe the *public* message, have private messages provided for them, even suppose there is authority for them? The whole erection of auricular confession within the Christian Church is a concession to *unbelief* in one of its most insidious forms! Is the confessor worthier of credit in the privacy of the confessional box than he is in the pulpit? Is the general absolution conveyed in the congregation less believable than absolution whispered in some secret place? The soul that will not accept of forgiveness when addressed to the great congregation must be credulous indeed if he supposes he has more certainty attached to the message through the confessional.

But in addition we must remember that the confessional is based on an entirely *false* assumption that to a particular order of men this power of private absolution has been committed. Scripture contains no direction to confess our sins to any priest. It encourages us to confess our sins directly unto God, and to receive His remission. It assures us "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). It encourages us also in the exercise of Christian confidence to "confess our FAULTS one to another, and to pray one for another that we may be healed" (James v. 16). But all this goes to prove that "priests" have in this matter of absolution no special prerogative. Forgiveness of trespass is a duty resting upon all Christian people. So far as this is concerned

"the power of the keys" belongs, as Luther maintained, to every Christian. Men not only can but ought to forgive sins committed against themselves, whether as individuals or as holding, possibly, office in the Church of God. And this aspect of forgiveness is well brought out by the Apostle Paul when he says, "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also : for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 10). Upon this passage Mr Robertson has the following acute criticism :—"It is quite true here that the apostle absolved a man whose excommunication he had formerly required ; but he absolved him because the congregation absolved him, not as a plenipotentiary supernaturally gifted to convey a mysterious benefit, but as himself an organ and representative of the Church. The power of absolution, therefore, belonged to the Church, and to the apostle through the Church. It was a power belonging to *all* Christians ; to the apostle because he was a Christian, not because he was an apostle. A priestly power, no doubt, because Christ has made all Christians kings and priests."¹ No more assurance of God's forgiveness can be obtained in a confessional box than may be got through intercourse with Christian people. Far less assurance can be got there than lies to our hands in the preaching of the Word ; for we are sure that the preaching of the Word is God's institution, but we have no such certainty regarding auricular confession !

§ 5. *Auricular Confession transforms a Minister of the Word into an uncommissioned and unqualified judge*

We have seen that from the sinner's side auricular confession argues culpable unbelief of the preached Gospel. It

¹ Cf. *Sermons Preached at Brighton*, third series, eighth edition, Sermon on "Absolution," p. 85.

is based on unbelief. But now we have to look at the institution from the side of the confessor. What is he? A self-elected judge in the place of God. The confessional box is a judgment-seat where souls come to be judged, and sent happy or "empty away." But before the judge pronounces in God's stead his "Absolvo te" (I absolve thee), he must probe the guilty conscience with casuistical questions. We have not studied the series suggested in such a book as Dens' *Theology*, but we understand they are of the most searching and degrading description. "Treatises on the nature of sin," says Dr Blakeney, "have been composed by Liguori, Dens, and others, for the guidance of the confessional,—treatises so polluted and filthy that we do not use language too strong when we say they are only fit for the abodes of hell."¹ Longfellow's description in his *Golden Legend* has all the air of truth :—

"And here, in a corner of the wall,
Shadowy, silent, apart from all,
With its awful portal opened wide,
And its latticed windows on either side,
And its step well worn by the bended knees
Of one or two pious centuries,
Stands the village confessional !

Here sits the priest, and faint and low,
Like the sighing of an evening breeze,
Comes through these painted lattices
The ceaseless sound of human woe ;
Here, while her bosom aches and throbs
With deep and agonizing sobs,
That half are passion, half contrition,
The luckless daughter of perdition
Slowly confesses her secret shame !
The time, the place, the lover's name !
Here the grim murderer with a groan,
From his bruised conscience rolls the stone,

¹ Cf. Blakeney's *Manual of the Romish Controversy*, p. 87.

Thinking that thus he can atone
 For ravages of sword and flame !
 Indeed I marvel, and marvel greatly,
 How a priest can sit here so sedately,
 Reading, the whole year out and in,
 Nought but the catalogue of sin,
 And still keep any faith whatever
 In human virtue ! Never ! never !
 I cannot repeat a thousandth part
 Of the horrors and crimes, and sins and woes
 That arise, when with palpitating throes
 The graveyard in the human heart
 Gives up its dead, at the voice of the priest,
 As if he were an archangel, at least."

But we do not desire, on the line of its immoral influence, to assail "this bulwark," as the Catechism of Trent calls it, "of Christian virtue." This has been done sufficiently. We would rather call attention to this judgment-seat erected within the Christian Church, occupied by an uncommissioned judge, who for this legal work has got no special fitness, and who cannot convey to distressed souls the assurance they are in search of. The curious paradox of the whole arrangement is that assurance of pardon and acceptance with God is something beyond the reach of the Church of Rome. When she has got the devotee into the confessional box, she suggests that the orders of this particular priest may not be genuine, and if so, the absolution he pronounces will not be effectual. Next, his intention may be at fault, and so another uncertainty is introduced into the arrangement. Next, only the sins confessed are forgiven, and others overlooked, forgotten, or kept back must remain unremoved. But even suppose all these uncertainties have been removed, the Church declares "absolute certainty unattainable."¹ So that the confessional cannot provide what it has been established

¹ Cf. Hunter's *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, vol. iii. pp. 139, 140.

ostensibly to secure, an assurance of God's pardon. The Church of Rome desires no soul to be quite sure of his salvation. If he becomes quite sure, he might become independent of the Church, and cease to submit to her discipline. This must never be permitted, if it can possibly be prevented. And so these poor judgment-seats are erected in the Church of God, filled by confessors who are never certain of their own salvation, and can in consequence convey no real certainty to other souls. By never-ending confidences nothing is secured except the revelation of secrets which would be safer in the keeping of God. By the confessional only one thing can be secured, and this is the subjugation of men and women to men who, on false pretences, have got hold of individual and social secrets, and can use them as instruments of torture to perpetuate a spiritual tyranny!

§ 6. *Auricular Confession must undermine the manliness as well as the morality of any people who submit to it*

There are confidential relations set up in this world which should be sacred, *e.g.* the relations of husband and wife, of father and son, of mother and daughter. The charm of family relationship consists in the mutual confidences which a family is meant to foster. God has "set the solitary in families" for this express purpose. And it is only the confidential relation in which each member stands to God Himself, who, as our Confidant, never betrays His trustful children, which can safely insert itself into the tender relations of Home. But lo! by this auricular confession, an intruder enters the family Paradise, insists as confessor upon knowing individual and family secrets, worms his way into what should be forbidden ground, and soon has the household at his mercy. The serpent was not more an intruder in Eden

than confessors are in the homes of the people. No wonder that, where auricular confession prevails, manliness is undermined, and people become enslaved to their priesthood. It is this aspect of the institution which is so serious for Protestant England. If the confessional multiplies among us, the manliness of England must decline. The character of Englishmen for straightforward, manly methods will soon give place to the duplicity and expediency which so speedily ruin nations. The sun of England's greatness, which has been rising towards the zenith since she became Protestant, will most assuredly culminate and begin to decline, should the sham confidences of self-elected confessors be encouraged among us!

We have seen that confession of "faults" among Christian people is encouraged in God's Word. This makes men manlier. And if Christians spoke oftener one to another about these matters, there would be no need of confession to a priest, and no fostering of unholy dependence through Rome's doctrine of despair. Christian fellowship is after all safer than unnatural and suspicious confidences on the part of ecclesiastical busy-bodies who have no spiritual assurances to convey.

CHAPTER XI

PROTESTANTISM CONTENTS FOR SALVATION BY CHRIST INSTEAD OF SALVATION BY A CHURCH

§ 1. *The Claim to a Monopoly of God's Saving Grace*

WE have already seen how determined an assault the Church of Rome makes on the "assurance of salvation," which sinners are encouraged by the Gospel to secure. She evidently thinks that no sinner should be permitted to occupy such an independent and happy position. She does her best, therefore, to interpose with a whole battalion of uncertainties in hope of keeping souls in her power. Devotees are to be kept at the mercy of the Church, instead of being allowed to enjoy the mercy of the Saviour. She has crowned the whole policy by declaring that out of her there is no salvation.¹ This raises the doctrine of the Church in its most practical form. So much so that Romish controversialists assert that the issue between Romanism and Protestantism is "Church or No-Church." By Church in the strict sense they mean "a visible, authoritative, infallible, and indefectible body or corporation," made up of "the body of pastors and teachers, or in other words, the bishops in communion with their chief."² And as Protestantism does not profess to have any such infallible corporation, the Romish partisans contend that we have really no Church.

Everything is by them staked upon the "visibility" of the Church. If the Church must be always a visible corporation, the Church of Rome thinks she will have little

¹ Cf. *The Creed of Pope Pius IV.*, § x. and § xii.

² Brownson's *Essays and Reviews*, New York, Sadlier & Co., 1874, p. 7.

difficulty in claiming the succession. But as Protestants we deny that visibility necessarily belongs at all times to the Church. We maintain that where "two or three," through force of circumstances, "meet together" in view of the Saviour's promise to be present in their midst, it may be in the catacombs of Rome, or "in dens or caves of the earth," to study God's Word and be helpers of one another's joy—there is there a Church! Visibility may thus be in abeyance. Or, to put the contrast historically, during the persecutions prompted by the Papacy, there were little "assemblies of the saints" meeting amid the Alps to listen to their pastors' preaching of the Word of God and to celebrate the sacraments; while down at Rome there was "a visible corporation," at whose head was a dissolute Pope, surrounded by cardinals, whose morals were also not above suspicion. If we had been in search of Christ's Church then, would we have found it at the Vatican or with the persecuted Waldensian peasants in the Alps? If the true Church in the Old Testament times was with Elijah and the "seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal," rather than with the priesthood that luxuriated at Jezebel's table; the true Church in the more modern period was with the puritans of the Alps rather than with the self-indulgent and persecuting curia at Rome. For the Church is where Christ's holy presence according to His covenant promise is felt, and circumstances will determine whether the "assembly of the saints" has its home in a cave or in a cathedral; on the mountain sides in times of persecution, or in tasteful edifices dedicated to God in times of peace!

But the point which here concerns us is the fact that the unchurching of other Christians is really a claim on the part of a Church to be a soul-saving machine! When Protestantism, as we have seen, idealises the Catholic Church, and says that outside the Church invisible there is no

salvation, this is simply because the Protestant invisible Church is so comprehensive as to include "all saints," past, present and to come! There is no uncharitableness in the Protestant position, but an all-embracing, God-like comprehensiveness. It is totally different, however, when a visible Church stands up and in a spirit of Pharisaism maintains that outside her pale there can be no salvation. Her claim is really to a monopoly of saving power. And to support this claim, the Church of Rome not only professes to be inspired and infallible, and endowed with miraculous power, but also by the mere mechanical performance of sacramental rites to secure their efficacy. When her priests baptize children or adults with consecrated water, she asks the world to believe she has regenerated them. When she puts the consecrated wafer on the tongue of the recipient, she asks the world to believe that she has thereby conveyed to him the body and blood of Christ. She thus claims to be a great machine for sacramental salvation, a soul-saving apparatus with patented celestial rights! In point of fact she claims to be an object of faith. Here are the words of Möhler in his *Symbolik*, and he has been the greatest champion of the Roman Church during the present century: "As the individual worshipper of Christ is incorporated into the Church by indissoluble bonds, and is by the same conducted unto the Saviour and abideth in Him only so far as he abideth in the Church, his faith and his conduct are determined by the latter. He must bestow his whole confidence upon her, and she must therefore merit the same; giving himself up to her guidance, he ought in consequence to be secured against delusion; she *must* be inerrable."¹ The Church thus claims the trust of her devotees; they must believe in her as the organ of salvation.

¹ *Symbolik, ut supra*, s. 339.

§ 2. *A Church never saved anybody*

What a Church exists for is to testify to the saving power of Christ. But if, instead of doing this, she points souls to herself as necessary for their salvation, she is simply misleading them. The paradox, moreover, of the situation is that the Church of Rome, who claims to be essential to men's salvation, cannot assure a single one of her devotees that he will be saved. To this Luther refers in his *Commentary on Galatians*: "Moreover the Pope," he said, "called all the world to the obedience of the holy Church of Rome, as to a holy state, in the which they might undoubtedly attain salvation; and yet, after he had brought them under the obedience of his laws, he commanded them to doubt of their salvation. So the kingdom of Antichrist braggeth and vaunteth, at the first, of the holiness of his orders, his rules, and his laws, and assuredly promiseth everlasting life to such as observe and keep them. But afterwards, when these miserable men have long afflicted their bodies with watching, fasting, and such like exercises, according to the traditions and ordinances of men, this is all that they gain thereby that they are uncertain whether this obedience please God or no. Thus Satan most horribly dallied in the death and destruction of souls through the Pope; and therefore is the papacy a slaughter-house of consciences, and the very kingdom of the devil."¹ The Church of Rome can manufacture slaves, but she cannot save anybody. It was never intended any Church should. Churches are candlesticks or lamp-stands to hold forth Christ, the true "Light of the World"; but the moment they absorb attention and pretend to possess saving power, they fail. Without Christ all is vain. A Paul may plant, and an Apollos water; but it is God alone who giveth the increase (1 Cor. iii. 6).

¹ Middleton's Edition, *ut supra*, p. 306; see also p. 324.

§ 3. *Trust in a Church is altogether different in kind from trust in a personal Saviour*

Suppose for a moment that the Roman claim was valid, and that we felt constrained to attribute to a visible Church the saving efficacy which Protestantism attributes only to the invisible and Divine Saviour; then it is not hard to see that the trust will be transferred from the invisible Christ to the visible and palpable Church! And suppose I am induced to believe that the Romish priest has power to regenerate souls by sacramental water; to change bread into the body and blood of Christ; and to dispense pardon from the judgment-seat of the confessional; then Jesus recedes into the background, becomes practically of none effect, and the world can be saved without His present interference. I have discovered in the visible organisation a vast machine which can turn out salvation in a mechanical and independent manner. The Saviour fades into dim distance; and the Church becomes all in all!

Is this not the danger at the present time that people will be tempted to trust for salvation to Churches? to rely on a Church's officers and sacraments and services to the neglect of Jesus Christ? The moment we admit that the mere *opus operatum*, the mechanical act, secures spiritual effects, then are we tempted to trust the Church visible with its holy water and holy wafers instead of the Saviour who is invisible. It is easy to trust in a great Church with its imposing edifices and crowds of officials, and multiplied ceremonies; to trust therein may be mere party spirit. It is not so easy to trust in an unseen Saviour and stake everything upon Him. As a matter of fact, men have trusted a Church when devoting themselves to sin. Have not Calabrian bandits looked to the Italian Church for saving rites while devoting themselves to barefaced robbery?

Have not criminals been encouraged to place themselves in the care of a Church as easier than to place themselves in the care of the sinless Saviour? And was not the infamous trade in indulgences, which paved the way for the blessed Reformation, proof positive that souls could trust in a Church and still love their sins? A man who trusts in a Church may through mere party spirit be the worse instead of the better of his trust. And so we may see clearly that attachment to a Church may be a case of mere party-spirit, a mere sectarian superstition; while there may be no attachment to Christ at all and no likeness to Him. Have we not all noticed how men can be unscrupulous partisans of a particular Church, while exhibiting no graces of the Spirit and evidently strangers to His sanctifying influences? The Church has been trusted, but Christ has never been approached, has been practically ignored!

In the Epistle to the Galatians the Apostle Paul combats exactly this error of trusting to Church ceremonies. Partisans of Judaism had come down from Jerusalem to persuade the Gentile converts that they could only be saved by submitting to circumcision and becoming Jews. This gospel of circumcision led men to trust in the mutilation of their bodies instead of in Christ for salvation. It was a false gospel and was denounced with a solemn anathema. A similar anathema should be pronounced on the doctrine that a certain Church must be submitted to in order to salvation. The only terms of salvation given in the Divine Word are trust in the merits of our Redeemer.¹

§ 4. *Nothing should be allowed to keep us from trusting in Christ as our only Saviour*

The apostles, as we may see from the *Epistles* as well as the *Acts of the Apostles*, were above all things preachers of

¹ Cf. *Cardinal Newman and His other Gospel*, Dublin, 1890, pp. 14, 32.

Christ. So were the Reformers. They did not preach up the Church; it needed in the sixteenth century to be preached down, and they did it manfully. A Church, which prevents Christ from being appreciated as the only Saviour of sinners, deserves denunciation. The Reformers reluctantly but conscientiously denounced the great Church of Rome as really anti-Christian in her policy and spirit. At the same time Christ was held forth by them as the only Saviour, and all men were encouraged to do as they themselves had done, to press past the self-elected confessors and mediators of Rome into the very presence of the Saviour Himself and to trust Him for time and for eternity. The Church was never meant to absorb the trust which, to be saving, must be given to Christ alone. We are in the same way to venture out in the exercise of faith upon Him who is invisible and who is yet able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. Whoever would interfere with this faith in Christ is our enemy and His!

Nothing is more needful in these days, when sacramental miracle is pressed upon the imagination of the credulous, than to emphasize the truth that trust, to be saving, must be *in Jesus only*! The tendency of the times is to depend on rites and ceremonies, instead of on Christ; to meet death "fortified by the rites of the Catholic Church" instead of simply trusting in the Saviour. We must resolve to allow nothing to detain our souls from Him. He is most assuredly an all-sufficient Saviour, we need no other. And Churches were established to witness in every way, by preaching, by administration of the sacraments, by the pastoral office, to Christ's unique position as the only Saviour of the world. If, forgetful of this duty of testifying to Christ, Churches call upon sinners to trust in them, they assume an anti-Christian position and hinder, instead of helping, the salvation of men. A visible, arrogant

Church, in appealing for confidence, is really resting on sense and sight, and prevents the exercise of a faith which is saving. Her devotees are walking in the light of material splendours and cultivating party-spirit and sectarian separation instead of trusting in the only Saviour.

Perhaps this danger may be pressed home in this way. When one goes to St Peter's in Rome, that centre of Roman worship, it is to realise that the great edifice is not meant for worship as we understand it, but is simply an immense *basilica* adapted to processions and the paraphernalia of superstition. And when the host is elevated, or the Pope is chaired in the immense building, is not the adoration, which should be reserved for the unseen Saviour, really given, as the case may be, to a consecrated wafer or a consecrated man? And all the reverence for what is seen may exist without a scintilla of trust in the unseen Saviour, to whom the Churches should loyally and in all things testify.

There is all the more need, then, to emphasize the saving power of Christ. "There is," as St Peter said, "in none other salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12, R.V.). The gospel of rites and ceremonies, of Churches out of which there can be no salvation, a mere gospel of ecclesiastical competition, is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. And of it we may in St Paul's spirit say, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Gal. i. 8). Let us come to Christ, then, and trust Him as the only Saviour. Let us duplicate the experience of apostles, confessors, martyrs, reformers, and the saints of all the centuries, that Jesus alone can save, and that He can save unto the uttermost. He can transform lost and guilty sinners into forgiven and accepted saints.

CHAPTER XII

PROTESTANTISM AND "BAPTISMAL REGENERATION"

§ 1. *Regeneration by the Waters of Baptism sets aside Salvation by Christ*

WE have just seen how the pretence of a Church to save men is really another gospel than that of Christ, and deserves to be emphatically condemned. But it will be necessary to follow up this scheme of ecclesiastical salvation, and in the interests of Protestantism to point out how subversive it is of the plan of salvation by Christ. We start with the beginning of divine life in the human soul, which is usually called Regeneration. The Church of Rome comes forward and professes to regenerate men through the waters of baptism. Thus the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* says:—"Baptism may be accurately and appropriately defined: 'The Sacrament of regeneration by water in the word.' By nature, we are born from Adam, children of wrath; but by baptism we are regenerated in Christ, children of mercy; for, 'He gave power to men to be made sons of God, to them that believe in His name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'"¹ For this regeneration in baptism the water must be "holy water," and a most formidable series of ceremonies are attached to the rite, as well as a most wonderful series of results said to be furnished by it. Into these details it is quite unnecessary we should enter. There are, we

¹ Cf. Donovan's Translation, p. 158.

should also remember, modifications of the Baptismal Regeneration theory, some believing that regeneration always takes place in baptism; others, like Canon Mozley, believing that we cannot be sure, but time will tell. If baptized children grow up "baptized heathens," the thorough-going believer in baptismal regeneration will conclude there has been a fall from baptismal grace; while Canon Mozley would in such a case believe that the baptism failed in its efficacy. But all who believe in baptismal regeneration believe that water is used in some magical fashion by the Spirit, who can do as He pleaseth, for the regeneration of the soul.¹ Now what we have to consider is the fact that, if souls are regenerated through the waters of baptism, a new plan of salvation is introduced into the Christian Church. The cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, which has been the sheet anchor of human hope for ages, is at once set aside. Christ becomes superfluous according to this theory. The Reformers saw this clearly. Thus Luther, who devotes a long chapter to "Baptism" in his *Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, says: "Very many have thought that in the word and the water there is some occult spiritual virtue, which works the grace of God in the soul of the recipient. Others deny this, and declare that there is no virtue in the sacraments, but that grace is given by God alone, who, according to His covenant, is present at the sacraments instituted by Himself. All, however, agree in this, that the sacraments are effectual signs of grace. They are led to this conclusion by this one argument, that it does not otherwise appear what pre-eminence the sacraments of the new law would have over those of the old, if they were only signs. Hence they have been driven to attribute such efficacy to the sacraments of the new law,

¹ Cf. *The Primitive Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration*, by the late Canon Mozley, London, 1856, *passim*.

that they have stated them to be profitable even to those who are in mortal sin; and have declared that neither faith nor grace are requisite, but that it is sufficient that we do not place any impediment in the way, that is, any actual purpose of sinning afresh. We must carefully avoid and fly from these doctrines, for they are impious and unbelieving, repugnant to faith and to the nature of the sacraments."¹ Calvin is still more explicit. "In this sense we are to understand what is said by Paul, that Christ sanctifieth and cleanseth the Church 'with the washing of the water by the word' (Eph. v. 26); and in another place, that 'according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost' (Titus iii. 5); and by Peter, that 'baptism doth save us' (1 Peter iii. 21). For it was not the intention of Paul to signify that our ablution and salvation are completed by the water, or that water contains in itself the virtue to purify, regenerate, and renew; nor did Peter mean that it was the cause of salvation, but only that the knowledge and assurance of it is received in this sacrament; which is sufficiently evident from the words they have used. For Paul connects together the 'word of life' and 'baptism of water,' as if he had said that our ablution and sanctification are announced to us by the gospel, and by baptism this message is confirmed. And Peter, after having said that 'baptism doth save us,' immediately adds that it is 'not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,' which proceeds from faith. But on the contrary, baptism promises no other purification than by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, which is emblematically represented by water, on account of its resemblance to washing and cleansing. Who, then, can pretend that we are cleansed

¹ Cf. Luther's *Primary Works*, *ut supra*, pp. 188, 189.

by that water, which clearly testifies the blood of Christ to be our true and only ablution? So that, to refute the error of those who refer all to the virtue of the water, no better argument could be found than in the signification of baptism itself, which abstracts us, as well from that visible element which is placed before our eyes, as from all other means of salvation, that it may fix our minds on Christ alone.”¹ We shall see later on the doctrine of the Reformers in this matter of the sacraments; but this much is now clear that keen intellects like theirs could never attribute to the waters of baptism the regenerating and cleansing power which belong only to the blood of Christ. To make water the means of cleansing the soul would be to set aside the salvation which comes through Christ alone. Baptismal regeneration will thus be seen to be “another gospel,” which no clear thinker can mistake for the gospel of Christ.

§ 2. *Scripture attributes Regeneration to the Holy Spirit operating on the soul through the Word*

That the Holy Spirit is the agent in regeneration Jesus shows in his conversation with Nicodemus when He says “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God”; “Ye must be born from above” (John iii. 3-7). And again “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit” (John iii. 8). That the means He employs in the work of regeneration is “the Word” will appear from the following passages: “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth” (James i. 18); we have been “begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God which liveth and abideth” (1 Peter i. 23).

¹ Cf. *Institutes*, book iv. chap. xv. § 2.

The application of the Word makes the regeneration part and parcel of the salvation by Christ. This is the link which makes "the truth as it is in Jesus" the vitalising power in the human soul. We have no reason to imagine that the Blessed Spirit, whose aim is to glorify Jesus in all things, ever used any other truth for the regeneration of men. Of course there is a realm of operation about which we dare not dogmatize, when the Spirit regenerates and sanctifies from earliest years; but we believe if little children who have grown up in the love and fear of God, could be cross-questioned on the subject of their new birth, it would be found that they had been turned from earliest times towards Jesus and His redeeming work, that is, towards the gospel story, which surpasses in interest all fairy tales, and which has, we are bound to believe, in the hands of the Spirit, regenerating power. A recent and able writer has said: "It is not so easy to define the position that Christ must hold in the conscious experience of men in the new beginning. In the more intelligent forms of Christian experience, occurring where there is a good degree of knowledge, Christ is perceived, and consciously and intentionally accepted, as the medium through which the new life that is desired comes from God into the soul. This may fairly be called the typical experience, since it is the experience that corresponds to the nature of the divine life. This is the experience that is celebrated in the hymns of faith and in the most intelligent testimony of Christians. But not all experience of regeneration is typical; none of it, indeed, is fully so, and much of it is very far from typical, because the conditions in men are so far from ideal. In many cases that are known among Christians there is good evidence of spiritual renewal, while there is little conscious recognition of Christ as the source of the new life. Men seem sometimes to be brought into

moral union with Christ without knowing that it is to Christ that they are brought. How far this may extend, it is difficult to judge; but experience varies so widely as to caution us against dogmatically limiting the probabilities of grace by theories too strict. God certainly cares more for the result than for the process, and it is quite possible that Christ, in his universal relation to humanity, may be able to pour his new life into open hearts, even when there is complete ignorance concerning the facts of his history and work.”¹ However this may be, we may be quite sure that regeneration by the waters of baptism was never set up by the Spirit in competition with regeneration through the truth as it is in Jesus.

§ 3. *Peter at Pentecost makes Baptism an Assurance of Remission of Sins to the Anxious and Penitent Converts*

We have happily a concrete case for our guidance in this important matter. St Peter in the exercise of the “power of the keys” on the day of Pentecost, indicated to the assembled thousands who had been converted through the preaching of Christ what they should do. “Repent,” he said, “and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins” (Acts ii. 38). That is, they were to unite themselves by a solemn, public ordinance to the Christian Church, take the sacramental oath of enlistment in the little band of the followers of Jesus, and so step into the sacred sphere of God’s own “saved ones,” wherein there is remission of sins by the blood of Jesus, and peace and joy through the gift of the Holy Ghost. They took Peter’s direction. They accepted of baptism as an *assurance* of the remission of their sins! Now it is here we see in baptism a “sealing ordinance,” as it has been called. It is an ordinance in

¹ Cf. *An Outline of Christian Theology*, by William Newton Clarke, D.D. third edition, Edinburgh, 1899, p. 398.

which not only is the Spirit's "washing of regeneration" symbolised, but by which pardon is sealed or assured to all who are truly penitent. It is thus a promise made directly to the recipient's faith. It will be evident, we think, from this that the baptism *presupposes* the act of regeneration, and is intended to convey the sweet assurance of the forgiveness of sins. If the ordinance is received in this spirit, it becomes a great spiritual power through the belief of the Divine promise. It was in this way Peter opened, not heaven, but "the Kingdom of heaven," *i.e.* the visible Church, to all believers. It was a concrete illustration of the exercise of the "power of the keys."

§ 4. *The Reformers make faith essential to the efficacy of the Sacrament*

Rejecting completely the theory that baptismal water can cleanse the soul, or the sacrament be efficacious where there is neither knowledge nor faith, the Reformers insist on faith being necessary to appropriate the promise. Referring to the possibility of baptism being administered by "a wicked minister," Luther says: "The efficacy of baptism depends not so much on the faith of him who confers it, as of him who receives it. Thus we read an instance of a certain player who was baptized in jest. These and similar narrow questions and disputes have been raised for us by those who attribute nothing to faith, and everything to works and ceremonies. On the contrary, we owe nothing to ceremonies, and everything to faith alone, which makes us free in spirit from all these scruples and fancies. . . . Our signs or sacraments and those of the Fathers have annexed to them a word of promise, which requires faith, and can be fulfilled by no other work. Thus they are signs or sacraments of justification, because they are sacraments of justifying faith and not of works; so that their whole efficacy lies in faith

itself, and not in working. He who believes them fulfils them, even though he do no work. Hence the saying : It is not the sacrament, but faith in the sacrament which justifies. . . . Thus it is not baptism which justifies a man, or is of any advantage ; but faith in that word of promise to which baptism is added ; for this justifies, and fulfils the meaning of baptism. . . . Let us then open our eyes, and learn to look more to the word than the sign, more to faith than to the work or use of the sign ; and let us understand that wherever there is a divine promise, there faith is required ; and that both of these are so necessary that neither can be of any effect without the other. We can neither believe unless we have a promise, nor is the promise effectual unless it is believed ; while if these two act reciprocally, they produce a real and sure efficacy in the sacraments. Hence to seek efficacy in the sacrament independently of the promise and of faith, is to strive in vain and to fall into condemnation. Thus Christ says : ‘ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned ’ (Mark xvi. 16). Thus He shows that in the sacrament, faith is so necessary that it can save us even without the sacrament ; and on this account when He saith ‘ He that believeth not,’ He does not add ‘ and is not baptized.’ ”¹ Calvin takes the same view : “ From this sacrament,” he says “ we obtain nothing except what we receive by faith. If faith be wanting, it will be a testimony of our ingratitude, to accuse us before God, because we have not believed the promise given in the sacrament ; but as baptism is a sign of our confession, we ought to testify by it that our confidence is in the mercy of God, and our purity in the remission of sins, which is obtained for us by Jesus Christ, and that we enter into the Church of God in order to live in the same

¹ Cf. Luther's *Primary Works*, *ut supra*, pp. 188-192.

harmony of faith and charity, of one mind with all the faithful. This is what Paul meant when he said that by one Spirit we are all baptized in one body."¹ The Reformers held firmly that the sacraments only profit believers. They have no effect if the inward state is unreceptive. They rejected with unanimity the idea that a sacrament could act externally and physically to produce a spiritual effect when there was no faith to lay hold of the promise.

§ 5. *In the case of baptized infants they either have dormant faith to receive the promise, or it is in their case not invalidated but postponed*

There can be no doubt that the difficulty in connection with this whole subject arises from the practice of infant baptism. The rise of the Baptist denomination has been a protest, and a very emphatic one, against every theory of baptismal regeneration. And the growth of this great denomination, especially in America, has been a most important experiment in this sacramental domain. They constitute, as a most important element in Protestantism, an embodied proof that baptism is not necessary to regeneration, but should follow after it logically, if not always actually. At the same time, the church membership of children cannot be so easily disposed of as the Baptist advocates imagine. God elected that children should be members of His Old Testament Church from the time they were eight days old; and Peter at the Pentecost had children evidently in view when he followed up the direction about baptism with the assurance, "For the promise is unto you, and TO YOUR CHILDREN, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts ii. 39). In the absence of any intimation that children should be disfranchised in the New Testament Church, it was only natural that the custom of infant baptism should

¹ Cf. *Institutes*, book iv. chap. xv. § xv.; see also § iv.

have been so prevalent and far-reaching in the present era. But now we have to notice how the Reformers deal with the difficulty of infant baptism in the light of their general principle that sacraments are efficacious only with believers. Here is Luther's deliverance on the subject in his *Babylonish Captivity of the Church*: "An argument will perhaps be drawn from the baptism of infants, who cannot receive the promise of God, or have faith in their baptism; and it will be said that either faith is not requisite or infants are baptized in vain. To this I reply, what all men say, that infants are aided by the faith of others, namely, that of those who bring them to baptism. For as the word of God, when it is preached, is powerful enough to change the heart of a wicked man, which is not less devoid of sense and feeling than any infant, so through the prayers of the Church which brings the child in faith, to which prayers all things are possible, the infant is changed, cleansed, and renewed by faith infused into it. Nor should I doubt that even a wicked adult, if the Church were to bring him forward and pray for him, might undergo a change in any of the sacraments; just as we read in the gospel that the paralytic man was healed by the faith of others. In this sense too I should readily admit that the sacraments of the new law are effectual for the bestowal of grace, not only on those who do not place any obstacle in the way, but in the most obstinate of those who do. What difficulty cannot the faith of the Church and the prayer of faith remove, when Stephen is believed to have converted the Apostle Paul by this power? But in these cases the sacraments do what they do, not by their own virtue, but by that of faith: without which, as I have said, they have no effect at all."¹ Luther's position, therefore, was this, that an infant presented for baptism

¹ Cf. *Primary Works, ut supra*, pp. 197, 198.

should be the subject of earnest intercessory prayer on the part of the assembled church, that faith may be there and then infused into his soul by the Holy Ghost, that so as one in whom faith may exist in embryo he may receive blessing through the sacrament. This is, it seems to us, a much higher idea to take of the ordinance than to administer it as some magical charm which holds, no matter how privately the sacrament is administered, or how little public intercession is made on the child's behalf. If baptism were administered with the moral enthusiasm and strong faith suggested by the Reformer, it might be a saving ordinance of evangelical Protestantism such as it has not yet been. When, however, we turn to Calvin we find him taking a somewhat soberer view. He would not prescribe times and seasons to our sovereign and gracious God. He is content to suppose that in connection with the baptism, the child has not experienced any regenerating change, but this fact does not invalidate the Divine promise, which takes effect the moment the baptised person believes and repents. Here are his words: "When they ask us what faith we had for many years after our baptism, in order to show that our baptism was vain, since baptism is not sanctified to us except by the word of promise received in faith: to this inquiry we answer, that being blind and unbelieving for a long time, we did not embrace the promise which had been given us in baptism, yet that the promise itself, as it was from God, always remained steady, firm, and true. Though all men were false and perfidious, yet God ceases not to be true: though all men were lost, yet Christ remains a Saviour. We confess, therefore, that during the time we received no advantage whatever from baptism, because we totally neglected the promise offered to us in it; without which baptism is nothing. Now, since by

the grace of God, we have begun to repent, we accuse our blindness and hardness of heart for our long ingratitude to his great goodness; yet we believe that the promise itself never expired, but on the contrary we reason in the following manner: By baptism, God promises remission of sins, and will certainly fulfil the promise to all believers; that promise was offered to us in baptism; let us therefore embrace it by faith; it was long dormant by reason of our unbelief; now then, let us receive it by faith. Wherefore when God exhorts the Jewish people to repentance, He does not command them, who had been circumcised, as we have remarked, by impious and sacrilegious hands, and who had lived for some time immersed in the same impiety, to be circumcised again: He only urges conversion of heart. For however the covenant had been violated by them, yet the symbol of the covenant, according to the institution of the Lord, always remained firm and inviolable. On the sole condition of repentance, therefore, they were restored to the covenant which God had once made with them in circumcision; even though they had received it by the hands of unfaithful priests, and had themselves done all that was in their power to corrupt it and render it ineffectual.”¹ Calvin’s view is consequently clear. In case of children who do not exhibit signs of God’s indwelling in their early years, we are to regard them as having received from God a promise which will be immediately made good when they repent. The promise as well as the vow of God is upon them, and the moment they are converted and repent the promise will be fulfilled. The question of a practical character which here arises is this, Is it a good thing for children to grow up with these covenant relations upon them? or is it better to leave them outside the mem-

¹ Cf. *Institutes*, book iv. chap. xv. sect. xvii.

bership of the visible Church until they can and will take the vows upon themselves? Believers in the propriety of infant baptism will answer the first question affirmatively, and Baptists will so answer the second. But sound Protestants can take either side in this controversy without falling into the fallacy and Christ-dishonouring doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

§ 6. *By Regeneration through the Spirit we re-enter the Family of God*

We have traced Protestantism up to its supreme principle in the sovereignty of God in Christ. It is an exercise of the clemency of our Heavenly King that He sends His Spirit from above into our hearts to give us new life. And this new life is so like His own that we enter into His filial relations with God the Father. We are enabled to cry "Abba, Father," for the Spirit has come as the "Spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15). But we must remember that we are by nature God's children, that He is by creation "the Father of our spirits" (Heb. xii. 9). Regeneration comes to enable us to re-enter the divine family from which sin had estranged us, and to make us feel "at home with God." The reign of Christ is thus a much more profound reign than that of any earthly potentate. He contemplates making every real subject a "son or daughter of the Lord Almighty." He contemplates making everyone who trusts and obeys Him a fellow or joint-heir with Himself, so that He may be simply "the First-born among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29). And as we enter the charmed circle once again, and know experimentally what "adoption" means, we find ourselves placed in unison with all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, no matter by what name they may be called. In the experience of regenerating love, we are set down among the "sons of God," to "go no more out."

CHAPTER XIII

PROTESTANTISM AND "BAPTISMAL JUSTIFICATION"

§ 1. *The Church of Rome's Contention that Baptism is the Instrumental Cause of Justification*

WE have seen in last chapter on what insufficient grounds the regeneration of the soul is attributed to the waters of baptism. As a matter of fact, the doctrine of "Baptismal Regeneration" is not half believed in by its advocates, else they would proceed by a manly and persevering use of the regenerating element to the salvation of the world. If "holy water" has such regenerating power, the believers in it ought consistently to make a tour of the entire world, baptize everybody they meet, and by a simple mechanical process secure the regeneration of mankind. The missionary enterprise would in this way be greatly simplified, its sacrifices and expenses curtailed, and a short cut taken to the salvation of the world. The fact that this has never been attempted goes to prove that the doctrine is not really believed in.

It need not surprise us, however, that a Church which has proposed to regenerate the soul through baptism should also propose to secure justification through the same instrumentality. The key of justification as well as that of regeneration must be kept, if possible, in the hands of the Church, so that her devotees alone may rejoice in the privileges of religion. Here are the words of the Council

of Trent: "The instrumental cause (of justification) also is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which the justification of no one ever happens."¹ We are thus asked to believe that Romish baptism is the divinely-appointed channel of justification, and that only those properly baptized need expect the privilege.

When we further inquire what the Church of Rome understands by this "baptismal justification," we find that it is something quite inferior to that offered us in the Divine Word. We are, indeed, assured that the justification is "a translation from that state in which the man is born a son of the first Adam into a state of grace and adoption of the sons of God by the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, which translation cannot be accomplished under the gospel without the love of regeneration, or the desire of it"; but then we are warned immediately that one mortal sin forfeits whatever merits we may previously have acquired through the sufferings and death of Christ, and entirely shuts us out from the gate of heaven which had been thrown open to all by the Redeemer's passion. To regain the baptismal grace we must devote ourselves to penance, and get in due season absolution from the Church. Kept constantly dependent upon *her* forgiveness, we are never certain of the forgiveness of all our sins in the present life.² Indeed absolute certainty on the subject is regarded as presumption. To quote from a recent writer on the subject, "Apart from these extraordinary cases," says Mr Hunter (*i.e.* the Virgin Mary's, St Paul's, and others referred to as favoured with special revelations) "not only can no one have the certainty of faith that he is in

¹ *Can. et Dec.*, Sess. vi. c. vii.

² *Cf. Can. et Dec.*, Sess. vi. c. iv; also Catechism, Donovan's Translation, pp. 112, 113.

favour before God, but he cannot have reason to put aside a misgiving on the subject ; one who considers his own weakness will see that absolute certainty is unattainable, especially as the judgment must necessarily be passed by each man as arbiter in his own cause on evidence furnished exclusively by himself. At the same time, while the Catholic doctrine rejects that assured confidence which may well be presumptuous, it is far from leading to despair. He who is not aware that the guilt of mortal sin is upon him, whose desire is to please God and save his soul, who grieves at the thought of what he has done amiss, loves prayer and the use of the sacraments, and strives to use his opportunities of doing good works, will have a conjecture that he stands well before God, which will give him a far truer peace than is attainable by Lutheran assurance.”¹ It is hard to see how a truer peace can be imparted by a system which leaves us in uncertainty than by a system which secures certainty. Moreover, it will be observed that we are thrown by this theologian in upon our own righteousness for a foundation of our hope. This is because the baptismal justification is not based upon the righteousness of Christ alone, but upon infused righteousness also. In fact the righteousness of Christ is simply a “make-weight” to bring our own personal righteousness up to the professed standard. A place is thus reserved for human merit in the matter of justification, with the result that an element of uncertainty pervades the whole process, and the individual is left at the mercy of the Church. Indeed so much is this the case that justification is regarded as a growing process, so that a soul is to be deemed in an increasingly justified condition. Hence the idea is suggested that Christ by His righteousness in life and death takes away our original sin, and all actual sin which may have taken place before baptism in

¹ Cf. *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, vol. iii., pp. 139, 140.

the case of adults, but post-baptismal sin must be patiently got rid of by penances and the absolution of the Church. In this way we are kept at the door of the confessional to get pardon in moderate instalments and absolute assurance of salvation only when faith has given place to sight in the world to come.

A similar view of Justification has been given by the Tractarian School. Dr Pusey, for example, says, "Ultra-Protestants have been taught that Justification is not the gift of God through his Sacraments, but the result of a certain frame of mind, of a going forth of themselves and resting themselves upon their Saviour; this is the act whereby they think themselves to have been justified. So, as another would revert to his baptism and his engrafting into Christ (at his baptism) and his thus being in Christ, so do they, to this act, whereby *they* were justified."¹ And Newman in his *Lectures on Justification*, in a page of special pleading based on the Homily on Justification sanctioned by the Church of England, says: "Here is distinct mention of faith justifying *after* Baptism, but no mention of its justifying *before* baptism; on the contrary, baptism is expressly said to effect the first justification."² He comes to the conclusion, consequently, that "Faith, considered as an instrument, is always secondary to the sacraments. . . . The sacraments convey the gift, and faith has but the negative office of not impeding its bestowal."³ The conclusion reached after long delay in the book is this, that "whereas Faith on our part fitly answers or is the correlative, as it is called, to grace on God's part, sacraments are but God's acts of grace, and good works are

¹ Cf. *Letter to the Bishop Oxford*, pp. 47, 48, quoted in Bishop M'Ilvaine's *Oxford Divinity*, London, 1841, pp. 393, 394.

² Newman's *Lectures on Justification*, second edition, 1840, p. 260.

³ *Ibid.*, second edition, pp. 262-269.

but our acts of faith; so that whether we say we are justified by faith, or by works, or by sacraments, all these but mean this one doctrine, that we are justified by grace, which is given through sacraments, impetrated by faith, manifested in works.”¹

§ 2. *Protestantism recognises in Christ's Righteousness the sole cause of Justification*

We turn away now from the false view given of the cause of justification to the true view. Protestantism was and is the glorification of Christ as the only Saviour. Among all the doctrines this one of “justification by faith” has been regarded as central, and, as Luther declared, “the article of a standing or falling Church.” We shall take it in stages and so reach distinct views of its component parts. Instead, then, of making baptism its cause, we recognise the fact that a person may receive justification without baptism. When the “dying robber” recognised in the dying Nazarene the Saviour of the lost, and believed Christ’s promise that he would that very evening enter the abodes of Paradise, he entered by simple faith into the enjoyment of justification, without any baptismal qualification whatever. In following in these matters the experimental method, a single fact like this is sufficient to overthrow a theory such as this of justification being dependent upon baptism.

To appreciate the relation in which Christ stands to this great experience of justification before God, we will do well to go back to consider the relation in which our first parent stands to our state of guilt and sin. The teaching of St Paul in the Epistle to the Romans is that our guilt and corruption were introduced into the world by the sin of the first Adam in Eden. “By one man sin entered into

¹ Cf. Newman’s *Lectures on Justification*, *ut supra*, second edition, London, 1841, pp. 344, 345.

the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (Rom. v. 12-18). The act of Adam was allowed to involve in condemnation his whole posterity. This may seem severe upon posterity, but, as a matter of fact, we have all, when we have had the chance, imitated him and plucked "forbidden fruit" from our various "trees of knowledge," and insisted on knowing many things of which we should have been better innocent. But the severity of the arrangement is transformed into sweet reasonableness and mercy when we find that Christ is sent as the second Adam to provide us by His obedience with justification of life. And so the apostle gives us the contrast: "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom. v. 18). In the righteousness of Jesus we find the cause and source of our justification. Let us try to realise our situation before God. We are upon our trial; He is our Judge. How shall we plead? Shall it be "Guilty" or "Not guilty?" It cannot be "Not guilty," for we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God; we are all "children of wrath"; we must in honesty confess our sins before God. But He can as a Sovereign exercise His clemency, and set the guilty free. "When God brings a charge against us," says an able theologian, "by his word, or by his law written on our hearts, he will listen to no plea but Guilty or Not guilty. If we would stand upon our own works before him, we must abide by the just sentence of his law. If we be afraid of this, and look wistfully to his clemency, we must come down at once from the high pedestal of our own righteousness, and mingle with the crowd of criminals below, on a level with the basest of them, and there, with

our heads bared and our hands on our mouth, we must await the sovereign disposal of our judge. Here, then, we have the distinction between justification by works and justification by grace. The one is the award of the law, declaring the innocence of a person falsely charged with guilt; the other is the sovereign act of One who is above the law, and who chooses to dispense with it, on certain grounds which He has provided. . . . A justification in which faith, that is, trust in another person, in opposition to trust in our own works is requisite, cannot be the award of the law pronouncing our innocency; it must be some act of favour and of power exercised out of the ordinary course of law, by the person in whom we trust. If an innocent man be charged with a crime before any court in the impartiality of which, and its power to ascertain the truth of the case, he has full confidence, he gives himself no further trouble about the charge, he feels himself secure in his integrity, and knows that he shall be acquitted. He would deem it beneath him to trust to any person to procure his acquittal. He would regard it as a confession of guilt to make any appeal to the mercy of his judge, or the clemency of his sovereign. It is only when a man is conscious that he is guilty of the crime laid to his charge, and is aware that his guilt is known and can be fully substantiated, that he feels it to be necessary to look around him for some other person to trust to. Nor does he ever think of appealing to the compassion of his judge or his sovereign till he has relinquished all plea of innocency, and has given up all intention of standing on the defensive. So, if justification could be obtained by works, why should faith in Jesus Christ be necessary? Could we entertain any suspicion respecting the integrity of our judge, or his knowledge of our conduct, that we must be put to our shifts, and forced to seek for some ground of confidence

beyond our own behaviour? Does not this very circumstance, that faith in another person is necessary to our obtaining justification, prove that we are treated as guilty? Is it not warning us not to appear on our trial with a plea of merit, and counselling us to throw ourselves on the mercy of our sovereign in time, that He, according to His own proposal, may use his prerogative on our behalf, and pardon our transgressions."¹ Who is this Person in whom we are directed to trust with a view to our justification before God? He is the Son of God, sent into the world to be a new Head to the human race, a second Adam, to show perfect obedience even unto death to the demands of the Father. There was no plucking of "forbidden fruit" from any "tree of knowledge" on the part of Christ, but the keeping of God's law in all its length and breadth, in its penalty as well as in its precept. And when we look into the life and death of the Lord Jesus, we must conclude that morally they have counter-balanced all the effects of the Fall. They have made a lost race interesting to the angels, who now see a glory in human history which it never had before the advent of Christ. The race has been redeemed through its new Head, the second, the sinless Adam. In the halo of His righteousness our guilt and sin are quenched, and we are ennobled through belonging to the same race with Jesus Christ. God can now be just while justifying those of us who believe in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26). He can exercise His sovereign clemency, while at the same time He has shown His hatred of our sin. For His Son's sake He justifies the ungodly who have learned to trust Him.

¹ Cf. Carlile's *Sermons on Repentance and Faith*, London, 1821, pp. 207, 210. These able sermons are believed to have suggested a good deal to Bishop O'Brien in his course, covering largely the same ground and published in 1833, on *The Nature and Effects of Faith*, which see *passim* on this whole subject.

§ 3. *Protestantism recognises in Justification the Declaration of the Judge that for His Son's sake sinners are pardoned and accepted before Him*

The word "justify" may bear two meanings, either to "make just" or to "declare just"; and, strange to say, it is by giving it the meaning to "make just" that all the confusion and mystification have been introduced into this all-important subject. If the fact that we are dealing in the first instance with God as a *Judge* were not lost sight of, we should be in no danger of straying into confusion. A judge does not take his seat on the bench to alter men's characters, but to determine whether they are innocent or guilty. And he does not seek for a "justification" of a person before him unless the person has committed some act or acts which require to be justified. His deliverance from the bench is accepted as an impartial judgment upon the facts before him in the interests of public morals. Now the justification of a sinner for Christ's sake is not, cannot be, an acquittal, for this would be pronouncing a person innocent who has pleaded "Guilty." The justification can, consequently, be no more than a declaration of pardon and, possibly, of acceptance. An earthly potentate could in the exercise of clemency pardon a criminal, if the public interests demanded it, but it seems past possibility to receive the criminal into the palace. Yet this is practically what God arranges for in our justification. We are not only "forgiven all our sins for His namesake," but we are "accepted in the beloved," and brought, as the prodigal was brought, to the Father's house and the Father's fellowship (1 John ii. 12, Eph. i. 6, Luke xv. 22-24). The Judge arranges to take the criminals whom He has pardoned home, to dwell henceforth in the palace of His love. Now this declaration of pardon and acceptance is a complete act

on the part of God our Judge. We occupy, ever after we have once realised justification, a new footing with God. We have become sons in His house. We may not be perfect, we may come short in the matter of duty, we may transgress much and often, but we have our Advocate with the Father, and we can realise His pardon every moment that we seek it. And so our justification proves a life in the light of God's reconciled countenance. "By faith alone in Christ," said Luther, "and not by the works of the law, or love, are we declared righteous; not that we reject works and love, as the adversaries accuse us, but that we do not allow ourselves to be diverted from the state of the present case."¹ It was this glorious assurance of reconciliation with God through Christ which gave the Reformers such peace and courage in presence of life's difficulties and trials.

§ 4. *Protestantism maintains that God secures the Sanctification of His People through the grace of gratitude*

The confusion on this whole subject lies in mistaking sanctification, which God secures along with the justification, for the ground of justification. Is God as Judge bound to take what He makes us as the ground for what He takes us to be? Is one gift to be taken as the ground of another? Must not both be accepted as of grace? When He pardons and accepts us for His Son's sake, He knows that the gratitude for salvation provided so freely will lead us to live before Him devoted and saintly lives. He shows us His confidence, and so begets ours. The sinners who are pardoned and admitted to fellowship will not shirk the responsibility laid upon them, but will serve God with enthusiasm. Take the subject according to the experimental method and see what becomes of it. The Reformers were men who passed into the light of God's

¹ Cf. *Commentary on the Galatians*.

reconciled countenance through justification. They believed God's word of promise, and became certain of personal pardon and acceptance in Christ. Did any of them run into any antinomian license? Were they not saintly, devoted men down to their dying days? Where in the sixteenth century will one find any to compare with them?

We can ourselves verify the experience of the sanctifying character of faith in Christ. To quote from the late Professor Stearns :—" He (the Christian) has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1), God is reconciled with him and he with God. The Father's smile is upon him. He knows himself to be in reality what he has always been by birthright, the Father's son, the heir of God, the joint-heir with Christ of the eternal inheritance (Rom. viii. 16, 17.) This sonship, recognised as a present reality, is an essential element in the forgiveness of sins. It is this that gives forgiveness its wonderful sweetness and significance. Theologians," he continues, " have been wont to describe justification in forensic terms, as a declarative act of God by which a new legal status is effected; and unquestionably their *meaning* is correct. But if we derive our theology not from scholastic treatises but from the experience of the Christian, read in the light of the Bible, we see that this mode of statement fails to do justice to the fact. The believer does not find himself merely in the presence of a Judge who has withdrawn the charges of the law against him; he stands before a Father who has given back his favour and confidence. A forensic judgment is always open to the suspicion of being a legal fiction. There is something external and unreal about it. It remains far-off, abstract, intangible. But the forgiveness or justification of which the Christian consciousness testifies in the first hours of faith is a personal matter. In it God comes

near to us, and we who were afar off from God, are brought near to him. It is not so much a matter of the divine government as of God's personal love. There is no suspicion of a legal fiction about it, because its reality is self-evident. Neither does it shape itself to our thought as something that can be abused, an act of partiality, a permission to go on in sin. It is so connected with Christ, and grows so out of our union with him; it is so manifestly the result of his worthiness, and wholly not of ours, that we are in no danger of mistaking it or taking an unworthy advantage of it. It is a forgiveness that throws us upon our honour, making it impossible for us to misuse it. It looks forward, too, so unambiguously to a holy life, is so clearly not an end in itself, but a means to a higher end, namely, our complete redemption, that it is impossible to regard it as unethical. The prodigal is brought back into the Father's house, the Father's kiss of forgiveness is bestowed upon him, the ring is put upon his finger and the shoes upon his feet, the fatted calf is killed for him, there is music and dancing and great rejoicing, and all that a new life may be possible, with new love to the Father, new obedience, and service (Luke xv. 11-32.)" ¹

We can, moreover, put it in this way. If we are perpetually in fear about personal salvation, never sure of our pardon and acceptance, we cannot in the very nature of things be so devoted to the welfare of others or so disinterested as those who have reached the assurance of the Reformers. God comes to us and says in His holy Gospel, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Salvation on the spot, without delay, without money and without price, without any bargaining in a legal spirit, is God's plan. But when we accept it in the spirit in which it is

¹ Cf. *The Evidence of Christian Experience*, pp. 149-151.

offered, we will in devout gratitude for such wondrous love resolve to "live not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 15). Sanctification is thus secured through gratitude.

§ 5. *Justification by Faith alone forbids any rite or any personal righteousness to dim our obligation to Jesus as our Saviour*

Protestantism, as we have seen, was a resolve to let no Church and no ceremony and no official stand between the sinner and his Saviour. This central doctrine of Protestantism, justification by Faith alone, forbids any rite and any experience to come between us and Christ. Baptism, when used as a rite with independent power located mysteriously in "holy water," by which regeneration and justification are supposed to be produced, is a rival of Christ and not a help towards Him. And infused or inherent righteousness, when regarded as the sandy foundation of justification before God, only leads us away from the rock of His righteousness on which justification should be built. We object to "baptismal justification," and we object to "justification through inherent righteousness" on the same clear ground that they lead us away from Christ instead of leading us to Him. Whatever interposes itself between us and Him, so as to detract from His unique relation to us as Saviour and Lord must be rejected. We need no other test than this regarding any doctrine. Does it detract from the Saviour's rightful honour as Saviour of the world? If it does, it is to be in the name of Protestantism rejected, no matter what names can be quoted in its favour or what temporary purpose it may be supposed to serve.

CHAPTER XIV

PROTESTANTISM AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

§ 1. *The Transition from Justification to Sanctification*

WE might have tarried longer over the great doctrine of Justification by Faith alone. As a justification of us through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, it glorifies Him as no doctrine of justification by inherent righteousness can do. It can be made the groundwork also of an entire system of theology as ingenious Germans have shown us.¹ But as much attention has been devoted by theologians to Justification² we shall proceed to other aspects of Protestant Belief requiring more attention at the present time. Sanctification has been noticed as secured by the faith which justifies. But as Protestantism has a good deal to say about Sanctification, and is striving earnestly after a higher measure, it will be necessary to notice the provision made for it in the Protestant movement. The assertion of the "priesthood of all believers" raises the whole question of Sanctification, and, if carefully thought out, will go far to settle it.

¹ See more particularly Sprecher's *Groundwork of a System of Evangelical Lutheran Theology*, where, in upwards of 500 large octavo pages, he develops, by large quotations from and comments on Luther's numerous writings, an exceedingly full and interesting theological system deduced from the single principle of Justification by Faith alone.

² Reference may be made to the well-known works of Dr John Owen, Bishop O'Brien, and Dr James Buchanan on the subject; O'Brien's is entitled *The Nature and Effect of Faith*; see also, *ut supra*, Dr James Carlile's *Sermons on Repentance and Faith*, one of the works of a Dublin Presbyterian Divine which deserve more attention than they have received.

§ 2. *The Priesthood of all Believers as emphasized by Luther*

The Reformer thought he found the doctrine in Augustine, but he was helped to it chiefly by Tauler. It becomes in Luther's hands, however, a power which it never was with the mystic. We may see it in full force in the *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*. The universal priesthood of believers and the equal rights and dignity of the laity and clergy are its great themes. He bases his doctrine upon 1 Pet. ii. 9, "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation," and on Rev. v. 10, "And hast made us unto our God, kings and priests." He maintains that priesthood comes to all believers in baptism, and cannot be conferred by ordination afterwards. The Christian ministry, as we shall see in next chapter, was regarded by Luther as an office to which suitable men are to be elected by the congregation of priests, to be exercised in the name of the believing people. "For, since we are all priests alike," he says, "no man may put himself forward, or take upon himself, without our consent and election, to do that which we have all alike power to do."¹ In his address on the "Abuse of the Mass" in 1522, we find him saying "Only one Priest do we have, viz., Christ who offered Himself for us all. This is a spiritual priesthood common to all Christians, whereby we are all priests with Christ, *i.e.* we are all the children of Christ, the High Priest, and need no other priest or mediator. As every priest (Heb. viii. 1) is set apart to pray for the people and preach, so every Christian, for himself, may pray in Christ and come to God (Rom. v. 2). . . . In the New Testament, the external priesthood is overthrown, for it makes prayer, access to God, and teaching common to all men."² And, only to give another quotation, we find him

¹ Cf. *Primary Works*, *ut supra*, p. 22.

² Cf. *Werke*, Band xxviii. s. 34.

saying in his work on *The Freedom of the Christian Man*, "Nor are we only kings and the freest of all men, but also priests for ever, a dignity far higher than kingship, because by that priesthood we are worthy to appear before God, to pray for others, and to teach one another mutually the things which are of God. For these are the duties of priests, and they cannot possibly be permitted to any unbeliever. Christ has obtained for us this favour if we believe in Him, that, just as we are His brethren and co-heirs and fellow-kings with Him, so we should be also fellow-priests with Him, and venture with confidence, through the spirit of faith, to come into the presence of God, and cry 'Abba, Father!' and to pray for one another, and to do all things which we see done and figured in the visible and corporeal office of priesthood."¹ And any large acquaintance with the works of Luther will show that he made the doctrine one of the corner stones of his edifice. Protestantism is committed to the "priesthood of all believers!"

§ 3. *The Aaronic Priesthood was only a temporary institution*

It will be necessary to go back to the Old Testament times to appreciate the deep meaning of the Protestant position. It is believed that down to the time of the gathering of Israel to Mount Sinai the heads of families discharged the office of the priesthood. But when God brought his people out of Egyptian bondage, it was to reveal to them a still grander idea. He did so in the message He gave to the people through Moses:—"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all

¹ Cf. *Primary Works*, ut supra, pp. 115, 116.

people ; for all the earth is mine ; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation " (Exod. xix. 4-6). Accordingly the entire people were brought to the holy mount to enter upon their priestly privileges and have direct access to God ; but the deliverance of the Ten Commandments in thunder tones to them by the Holy God was more than enough for them. " And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking ; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us, lest we die " (Exod. xx. 18, 19). In this way the people put away the priestly privileges from them and asked Moses to be their Mediator. What these priestly privileges were is brought out in connection with the rebellion of the Korahites, when Moses declared " To-morrow Jehovah will show who is His, and who is holy, that He may suffer him to come near unto Him ; and whom He shall choose, him will He suffer to come near unto Him " (Num. xvi. 5). " There are," says Kurtz in his *Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament*, " four characteristics of the priesthood indicated here. The *first* is *election by Jehovah*, as distinguished both from wilful self-appointment, and also from election by human authority of any kind whatever. The *second* is the result of this election, viz. *belonging to Jehovah* ; which means, that the priest, as such, with all his life and powers, was not his own, or the world's, but had given himself entirely up to the service of Jehovah. The *third* is, that as the property of Jehovah, the priest, like everything belonging to Jehovah, was *holy*. And this involved the qualification for the *fourth*, viz. *drawing near to Jehovah*, as the true and exclusive prerogative and duty of the priest." ¹ Now to these privileges

¹ Cf. Kurtz, *ut supra*, Clark's edition of 1863, p. 35.

Moses was, as we have seen, elected by the people, who would not accept them themselves. And he transferred them to his brother Aaron and his family and their successors as a temporary arrangement, until such time as God got His grander idea carried out. For it is a grander idea that a whole nation should be priests than that a single tribe should be so. It is a far grander idea that all God's people should have access to Him than that the privilege should be confined to a class. Now when Jesus came upon the scene He began to realise the great idea. He dealt with God directly, although not of the line of Aaron, and encouraged men also to do so in His name. So that the Jewish priesthood with all its ceremonies and exclusiveness has been superseded by a wider priesthood, that which God had in view from the first, which Peter and John set before us in the passages already quoted, and which Luther was led to emphasize at the Reformation, the priesthood of all believers.

§ 4. *The Christian ministry never called a priesthood in the New Testament*¹

Now it is surely significant that the term "priest" is never once used in the New Testament to signify a Christian minister. "For communicating instruction," says the late Bishop Lightfoot, "and for preserving public

¹ An effort has been made in the interests of High Churchism to put the Christian ministry under the category of "priesthood," notwithstanding the fact that the N.T. writers avoid associating the ministry with priesthood, and associate it with the prophetic office. And Dr R. C. Moberly, whose volume on *Ministerial Priesthood* is classical in its importance, ventures to explain the N.T. *usus loquendi* from the fact that the Jewish temple was still standing, and "priesthood" would have been confounded with the outward and mechanical Jewish idea. He thinks that when the temple was destroyed and the Jewish priesthood abolished, this danger ceased and the ground was cleared for the conception of "ministerial priesthood." This, moreover, he bases upon the "priesthood of all believers," regarding the ministry as a delegated priesthood to exercise priestly functions in the name

order, for conducting religious worship and for dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and the privileges of the Christian people are never regarded as transferred or even delegated to these officers. They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the Church, and the like; but the sacerdotal title is never once conferred upon them. The only priests under the gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. As

of the whole Church. And when we inquire what the priestly functions are which the ministry is to exercise, we are assured that they are ceremonial as well as moral, and that the culmination of the functions is to be found in the Eucharistic sacrifice. This Dr Moberly defines to be "the symbolic embodiment and *realization* of Christ's atonement in its fullest inclusiveness" (p. 265). How dangerously near the Roman doctrine of priestly mediation and the sacrifice of the mass this is, will appear from the word I have underlined in the above extract.

The pity is to find ministers outside the Episcopal Churches falling into the same idea. Dr Forsythe, in his recent work on *Rome, Reform, and Reaction*, tries to meet the sacerdotal dangers of the time by following Dr Moberly in placing the Christian ministry under the category of "Priesthood," and asserting the validity of the "orders" of Free Churchmen because those of a delegated priesthood. But what necessity is there for placing the Christian ministry under the category of priesthood? The N.T. writers associate it, on the contrary, with the prophetic office (Eph. iv. 11, 12). The Epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes the PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST as what abides, while the priesthood of mortal men is temporary. Christ still officiates as Priest for the Church, and His ministers are appointed simply to proclaim His excellences, to direct the guilty to Him, and to instruct the Church, that its members may grow in the knowledge of Him (*cf.* Dr Brown's *Apostolical Succession*, Lect. vi.). The Eucharist, moreover, is an emphasized gospel, directing worthy communicants to Him, and not itself absorbing their attention and their confidence. The "priestliness of the Church" will be exhibited, not by a "ministerial priesthood," which is not a New Testament conception at all, but a Cyprianic after-thought, but by a consecrated, high-toned life on the part of *all* professed Christians. No spurious High Churchism, such as Dr Forsythe suggests, will meet the sacerdotal danger, but a true inward Protestantism such as is advocated in this book.

individuals, all Christians are priests alike.”¹ “In nothing,” says Dr G. A. Jacob, “is the speaking silence of the New Testament more complete and significant, than in the fact that never *there* are Christian ministers of any degree, called priests. Neither the apostles themselves, nor any office-bearers whom they appointed, are even spoken of as having sacerdotal powers, or sacerdotal duties committed to them. In *no single instance* is anyone of the words, which describe the priesthood and its work, assigned to the office of the Christian ministry or to its ministrations.”² So that there was no excuse for the Fathers when they began to apply sacerdotal terms to what was an entirely different office, and so to deceive themselves and posterity.³

§ 5. *The Priesthood of all Believers indicates the Protestant ideal of Sanctification*

If all believers are priests, not only are we all to exercise certain priestly functions, to which we shall presently refer, but we are to carry the idea of holiness or consecration into everything! The secular vanishes away because everything has become sacred. Business, pleasure, “whatsoever we do,” as well as “eating and drinking,” are all to be lifted into the atmosphere of consecration, because engaged in by those who are “priests unto God.” In the apocalyptic vision the

¹ *Commentary on Philippians, ut supra*, pp. 182, 183.

² Cf. *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, London, 1871, p. 106. Dr Sanday has indeed, in his recently published *Conception of Priesthood in the Early Church and in the Church of England*, p. 90, controverted this, and discovered in St Paul's use of *ιεροουργούντα* in Rom. xv. 16, one passage which connects sacrifice with the ministerial office. But the oblation being “the gospel” shows that Calvin was right when he maintained that the priestly idea is only used “metaphorically” in this instance, and cannot be taken as a ministerial title. (See Shedd *in loco*; also, since the above was written, Rev. C. A. Scott on “Ministering in Sacrifice,” in the *Expositor* for February 1900.)

³ The unfortunate introduction of the sacerdotal idea is usually attributed to Cyprian.

redeemed are represented as engaged in perpetual priestly service, serving God day and night in His temple (Rev. vii. 15). In another of the visions the divine says, "I saw no temple therein" (Rev. xxi. 22). No temple necessary to suggest consecration, because everything has been lifted into the light of seraphic service. Now this is exactly the ideal of Protestantism, to secure a sense of complete consecration on the part of all believers. It is not a deliverance from sin merely, but the carrying of a positive spirit of consecration into every nook and cranny of the believer's life. Perhaps we can realise the thought in this way. One of Bonar's *Hymns of Faith and Hope* contains the following stanza :—

"A few more Sabbaths here
Shall cheer us on our way,
And we shall reach the endless rest,
Th' eternal Sabbath-day :
Then, O my Lord, prepare
My soul for that sweet day :
Oh ! wash me in Thy precious blood,
And take my sins away."

Now, are there not many who would regard the prospect of an "eternal Sabbath-day" as anything but bright? They have been so immersed in what is worldly and secular that they are thankful the weariness of a consecrated day comes but once a week! It will take a long time to get such souls up to the idea that the day entirely consecrated becomes in consequence "the best of all the seven"; it will take a much longer time to educate conscience up to the pitch when it testifies that every day should be just as consecrated as the Sabbath; that for a "priest unto God," as every believer ought to be, there should be no secular at all, because everything should be sacred! This is a far deeper and grander idea than cutting life up into portions, labelling certain functions sacred and sacramental, while the

rest may be allowed to lapse into the common and secular. It is surely grander to have everybody, if possible, a priest, than to have only a separate class priests; to have *business* conducted by those who feel they are "priests unto God" and can be consecrated during business hours, than to have business handed over to Satan and secularity; to have *pleasure* engaged in by priestly, consecrated souls who believe in innocent enjoyment and promote it, than to hand over the realm of mirth to the Devil and his angels; to have everything consecrated, than to have a few things labelled holy, and all the rest common and unclean. Now, this is what God aims at, and what Protestantism aims at when it emphasizes the priesthood of all believers.

It will, of course, be said, "This is quite impossible in this work-a-day world." And we admit that the ideal is not going to be realised by anybody at a bound; we admit that only One has as yet in this world carried out perfectly the consecration, and that it is hard to "be as He was in the world." Still it is worth aiming at, and it is this which makes it so valuable as an ideal. We can never on this line be *self-satisfied*, and, as a matter of fact, God never meant us to be. His whole aim is to deliver us from confidence in self. And so He starts us on the upward journey, shows us the snow-white pinnacle of absolute perfection in His Son, asks us to follow Him, and the path of consecration will be found to end in no half-way house of self-satisfaction, but only in the kingdom of heaven.

Dr J. G. Holland has given us the true idea of progressive sanctification in his poem "Gradatim." We will be pardoned for quoting it.

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

I count this thing to be grandly true ;
 That a noble deed is a step toward God—
 Lifting the soul from the common clod
 To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet ;
 By what we have mastered of good and gain ;
 By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
 And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,
 When the morning calls us to life and light,
 But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the night,
 Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,
 And we think that we mount the air on wings,
 Beyond the recall of sensual things,
 While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men !
 We may borrow the wings to find the way—
 We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray ;
 But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
 From the weary earth to the sapphire walls ;
 But the dreams depart and the vision falls,
 And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound ;
 But we build the ladder by which we rise
 From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
 And we mount to its summit, round by round.”¹

§ 6. *The Priesthood of all Believers implies on the part of
 Protestants missionary enterprise*

We shall devote a chapter further on to “ Protestant Missions ” ; meanwhile it will be well to reveal here their real basis. When Luther laid such emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, he distinctly recognised one of the duties of the priests to be to pray for others, and if necessary

¹ *The Marble Prophecy and other Poems.* New York : Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1875, pp. 46, 47.

to teach them; and he supposes a believer in a heathen district where there are no ministers available, and he shows it to be his duty, no matter what his calling may be, to instruct the heathen in the Gospel. The idea consequently is this, As priests, believers stand between the living God, to whom we have access through the only High Priest, and the unbelieving world. We are so far mediators that we should pray for the world which lies in the wicked one, and do our best to instruct it in the Gospel. The missionary enterprise is a clear consequence of the priestly, consecrated position we occupy as believers before God. And, as a matter of fact, the Reformers were as missionary in spirit as their circumstances permitted. They had not the same access to heathen lands as the Roman Catholic powers in the sixteenth century. They had not the facilities their enemies enjoyed. But they were splendid missionaries at home, if they could not do much among the heathen. Like Luther at the Wartburg translating the Scriptures for the common people, they everywhere applied themselves to the instruction of their fellows in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. They were pre-eminently "doctors of the Scriptures," like their illustrious leader, and they seized every opportunity of promoting a knowledge of Christ among men. Sanctification takes of necessity a practical turn with all who realise that they are "priests unto God."

§ 7. *In the Priesthood of all Believers Protestantism finds the highest, not merely a higher Christian life*

An effort is being made in Protestant Christendom to formulate and reach what has been called a "higher Christian life." Into the various statements of what it means we need not enter. It consists largely in insisting on Christ being taken as our sanctification as well as our justification. By so doing it is supposed we may step at

once into a sweet release from all anxiety about sanctification, committing it with all other things to the kind consideration of the Saviour. And an effort is made to represent Luther and a few known saints, as well as a number of nameless examples, as having passed through some second experience, like the first conversion, and to have emerged in consequence upon the sunlit uplands where it is always noon.¹ *The Secret of a Happy Life* is the name of one of the publications on the subject, and a revelation of the end in view. If one can rejoice in an immeasurable happiness through identifying oneself with Christ, the aim has been attained.

Now we have no desire to criticise in detail the laudable efforts which have been made by many to reach a higher state of spirituality. We are content with this practical test. Whatever is meant by Christ being made unto us "sanctification," it is clear from the succeeding context that it must lead us to glory not in self but in the Lord (1 Cor. i. 30, 31). And if the course we have pursued leads us to self-satisfaction, to glory in ourselves, instead of in our Saviour, then we have somewhere got off the true track. Moreover, when we look into the lives of the greatest saints, we find that they have been set in a penitential key, so that they progress in self-depreciation and in self-abasement as they progress in sanctification. Though forgiven by God, they cannot forgive themselves for their sins. They repent in dust and ashes, with a deeper penitential tenderness as they go forward. Dr Boardman, in his reply to his namesake's better known volume, has brought forward such examples as John Owen, John Bunyan, John Newton, Archibald Alexander, Robert

¹ Cf. W. E. Boardman's *Higher Christian Life*, *passim* : also a very sober and able reply entitled *The "Higher Life" Doctrine of Sanctification tried by the Word of God*, by Henry A. Boardman, D.D., Philadelphia, 1877, *passim*.

Murray M'Cheyne, William Wilberforce, and Charles Simeon, as examples of increasingly penitent saints whose experience may certainly be relied on. For the fact of the rapture of self-satisfaction being experienced by some people does not make the experience a true one; it must be experience which tallies with the standard of the Divine Word. Now all the Bible saints, except the sinless Saviour, have been set in the penitential key, and have been saved from self-satisfaction. It is along the line of increasing penitence that genuine sanctification must proceed.

"It is often asked," says a writer already quoted, "whether there is a higher Christian life. The answer is, yes; and a higher life beyond it, and a higher still beyond. The Christian life is ever higher and higher. It must pass through all stages between its beginning and its perfection. . . . Expectations of a speedy completion, and claims of completion already attained, are founded upon insufficient sense of the greatness of the work. Usually there is an inadequate definition of sin, according to which sin can easily be made to seem a thing of the past. Often there is a shallow sense of sin, and often there is a quick and enthusiastic, but indiscriminating appreciation of divine grace. Usually it is assumed that sinlessness is perfection. But sinlessness is not perfection; it is the indispensable condition for the attainment of perfection. When a soul has become sinless, then the movement towards the full perfection of a soul may go on more freely."¹ In these circumstances we shall find much assistance in viewing the whole process in the light of this idea of priesthood. Just as the Jewish priests were accustomed first to present sacrifices to remove their own sins, and then sacrifices to remove the sins of the people; so we, as priests unto God, will in penitence secure the removal of our sins through

¹ Cf. Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 415, 416.

the sacrifice of the Saviour, and then devote ourselves to the removal through the same all-sufficient sacrifice of the sins of others. And over and above this spiritual interest in men, we will seek to carry into every detail of life the priestly, consecrated spirit. We will purify ourselves even as Christ is pure. We will serve God as far as this is possible at all times and in all things; day and night in the temple of time and of opportunity. And as we carry forward the idea of priesthood beyond death and sin into the temple of eternity, we shall see the possibility of everlasting progress in consecrated service. "The goal of sanctification," continues Dr Clarke, "is perfect goodness like that of God, and that goal lies far beyond deliverance from sin. Even if perfect goodness were reached, there would still open before the soul the living of the perfect life that then first is possible; and in that life, with its high experiences inconceivable at present, a finite spirit must still be gaining in richness of spiritual quality and power of holy service. If an end of the progress of the divine life in accordance with its qualities is possible, it lies far beyond the reach of human thought. Sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit, begun here, to be carried on hereafter, and destined to endless continuance."¹

What we have seen in Protestantism has, therefore, been mistaken but honest efforts in many cases to hurry up the perfection, which, fortunately for us all, takes time, if it is going to be thorough. It is not so easy to get rid of sin in all its forms; it requires large and long application of the blood of Jesus. But even when we have reached the sinlessness of another life, we shall find it requires effort to bring consecration as a definite purpose into every detail of the ampler life which we hope to spend amid ampler conditions.

¹ Cf. Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 417.

CHAPTER XV

PROTESTANTISM ASKS GOD FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTERS AND DECLINES A SACRIFICING PRIESTHOOD

§ 1. *The Priesthood of Believers—how endowed according to Luther*

WE have seen in last chapter that the Divine idea from the first was a universal priesthood of believing souls, rather than any sacerdotal class, and that Protestantism awoke to the grand idea and proceeded to put it into practice. We have next to notice how this priesthood is endowed. Now Luther was very clear as to the call of this believing priesthood to teach and administer the sacraments and exercise the authority of the Church. He maintained that Christ gave to the believing people the commission to teach the nations and to exercise the power of the keys. As the Protestant movement really turns upon this particular point, it will be necessary to study it with some care.

In his *Address to the Nobility* he takes up the matter in its rudimentary form:—"If a little company of pious Christian laymen were taken prisoners and carried away to a desert, and had not among them a priest consecrated by a bishop, and were there to agree to elect one of them, married or unmarried, and were to order him to baptize, to celebrate the mass, to absolve and to preach; this man would as truly be a priest, as if all the bishops and all the popes had consecrated him. That is why in cases of necessity every man can baptize and absolve, which would not be possible if we were not all priests. This great grace and virtue of baptism and of the Christian estate,

they have almost destroyed and made us forget by their ecclesiastical law. In this way the Christians used to choose their bishops and priests out of the community ; these being afterwards confirmed by other bishops, without the pomp that we have now. . . . For, since we are all priests alike, no man may put himself forward, or take upon himself without our consent and election, to do that which we have all alike power to do. For, if a thing is common to all, no man may take it to himself without the wish and command of the community. And if it should happen that a man were appointed to one of these offices and deposed for abuses, he would be just what he was before. Therefore a priest should be nothing in Christendom but a functionary ; as long as he holds his office, he has precedence of others ; if he is deprived of it he is a peasant and a citizen like the rest. Therefore a priest is verily no longer a priest after deposition. But now they have invented *characteres indelibiles*, and pretend that a priest after deprivation still differs from a simple layman. They even imagine that a priest can never be anything but a priest, that is, that he can never become a layman. All this is nothing but mere talk and ordinance of human invention. It follows then, that between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, or as they call it, between spiritual and temporal persons, the only real difference is one of office and function, and not of estate : for they are all of the same spiritual estate, true priests, bishops and popes, though their functions are not the same.”¹ In his sermon on 1 Peter ii. 9, he says : “ All those now called priests should be all laymen like the rest, only some should be chosen by the congregation, as its officers, to preach. The distinction, therefore, is one that is only external, and respects the office, to which one is called by a congregation ;

¹ Cf. *Primary Works*, *ut supra*, pp. 21-23.

but before God, there is no distinction. Only some are selected from the mass in order to exercise for the congregation the office which belongs to all, and not that one has more power than another.”¹ “Since He (Christ) is priest, and we are all His brethren, all Christians have the authority and command to preach and proclaim God’s grace and virtue, etc., and to go before God, that one may intercede for the other and offer himself to God. Nevertheless, as St Paul says that everything should be done in order, not everyone should teach and administer the sacraments in the congregation, but those only who are called by the congregation, and to whom the office is entrusted, and the rest should listen in silence.”² The power of the keys, moreover, Luther assigns to the Church. “Christ gives the keys to the entire congregation, and not to St Peter. This is shown in Matt. xviii. 18-20, where Christ gives them to St Peter for the entire congregation.”³ Luther’s position, then, is this. The priesthood of believers gathered into congregations has the duty of preaching God’s Word, administering sacraments, and exercising discipline committed to it; but that all things may be done decently and in order, they select and call to the office of the ministry those of their number who are qualified for the work. This call is the minister’s credential to enter upon the work, and he enters on the office in the name and as the representative of the assembled Church.

§ 2. *The office of the Christian Ministry not sacerdotal, but evangelistic*

We have already seen that the practical outcome of a priesthood of believers, standing in a state of grace between God and the world, is to lead them to missionary enterprise

¹ Cf. *Werke*, Band li. s. 387, etc.

² *Ibid.*, Band lii. s. 72.

³ *Ibid.*, Band xxvii. s. 350.

and constant intercession. But for sacerdotal functions, mediating between men who are priests themselves and God, there is no place, except in the case of the one High Priest, Jesus Christ. Sacerdotalism is historically an anachronism—it is “going back to beggarly elements” from which Christ has delivered us. And so, as it has been pertinently remarked, “The way of access to God being open to all without distinction through the priesthood of Christ, there was nothing for a priest to do—no sacerdotal work or office for him to undertake.”¹ The reign of the priest was over—the reign of the preacher had come. It was fitting that Luther, the very greatest preacher of modern times, should inaugurate the new movement. What Europe and the world needed in the sixteenth century and needs in the nineteenth is PREACHERS—not “priests” with fancied sacramental miracles, to which we shall refer farther on—but preachers. The proclamation of the Gospel, not the celebration of miraculous sacraments, is what the world needs. Sacraments have indeed their place, but it is supplemental and secondary, not primary as in the sacerdotal idea. The marching orders of the Church, to make disciples of the nations, can be fulfilled only by the preachers. And so we see in Protestantism a great evangelistic movement. The Reformers were to a man great preachers. Their effort, moreover, was to provide preachers and teachers for mankind. The movement was of necessity educational, oratorical, evangelistic; the persuasion of men by personal and fervent address to be reconciled to God and to join the universal priesthood. And so Protestantism has never contented itself with a division of labour in this matter, as if the appointment of a preaching order of monks could overtake the instruction of God’s people and the world.

¹ Cf. Jacob’s *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, *ut supra*, p 102.

Romanism has fancied that by parading a few eloquent Dominicans, like Lacordaire or Burke, she can discharge her duty in the matter of preaching to the world, that is waiting to hear something helpful from an "Infallible Church." But Protestantism, with a truer conception of the world's needs and the ministerial office, lays the emphasis on Preaching; trains not priests but preachers; makes preaching the chief part of pastoral work; and so provides the gospel for the world!¹ Of course a preacher with the spiritual qualifications which membership in the universal priesthood implies, will be much more than a preacher. He will be pastor also, trying to discharge his secondary duties of visitation, and social reform, and public spirit as he best can.² He will remember that the priestly order of believers to which he belongs deserves his sympathy and help whenever he can wisely offer them, and that the world needs priestly citizens. But all these duties in the homes of the people, on public platforms, and wherever truth and righteousness can be promoted, are subordinate and subsidiary to the preaching of the Word. And so long as Protestantism maintains its pre-eminence in preaching, it will be owned of God in contributing proportionally to the enlightenment of the world.

§ 3. *The administration of the Sacraments, the emphasizing of the Gospel*

The Reformers held that the due administration of the Sacraments was also needful to the constitution of a true

¹ The multiplication of monographs on Preaching is so great in Protestant Churches that selection becomes difficult and invidious; but no one in recent years has written so well upon the subject and illustrated it so nobly as the lamented Phillips Brooks whose *Lectures on Preaching* surpass all his volumes of sermons, and who will be remembered as a "king of men," whose throne was the pulpit, not the Episcopal Chair!

² Cf. *The Christian Pastor and the Working Church*, by Wash. Gladden, D.D., LL.D., p. 107, etc.

Church. Hence they arranged for this, as well as for the preaching of the Word. We have said that the sacraments are supplementary and secondary, and that the preaching of the Gospel must stand first. We shall also have something more to say about the miraculous aspect of the sacraments as administered by Sacerdotalists. They make the sacraments primary, and not secondary. But what we have here to notice is that the sacraments are evidently meant by our Lord to be aids to the promulgation of the Gospel. They are to lead to Himself. If the sacramental theory entertained has the tendency to lead our souls away from Him, and to encourage us to look to the sacrament and to trust in the sacrament, then we are on the wrong track and are straying from the truth. The true doctrine of the sacraments will help us to reach the Saviour by means of them. Now we have already noticed the nature of Baptism. As the initial rite of "the kingdom of heaven," it symbolises for us the washing of regeneration and cleansing which came to us through the Spirit applying to our polluted souls the blood of Jesus. The "Baptismal Regeneration" theory, as we have seen, obscures this truth, draws attention to the water, ignores the blood, and becomes a false gospel. In the same way, the Lord's Supper, if administered on the supposition that the bread and wine are changed so as to become a physical vehicle for conveying the body and blood of Christ into the person of the recipient, will become an obscuration of Christ's death and passion, instead of a memorial thereof. Any theory of the Eucharist, which concentrates attention and hope upon the material elements and so prevents us getting past them and through their suggestiveness to the Saviour and His One Sacrifice on Calvary, is misleading and unprofitable. We must realise in the celebration of the Supper an embodied gospel appeal; a supplement to the preached Word; an exaltation of the

atoning Sacrifice offered by our blessed Saviour once for all! In short, the Sacraments when duly administered, are emphatic and vivid presentations to the soul of Gospel truth, and so a part of that evangelistic movement which has been the glory of Protestantism. Now the right to administer the sacraments resides in the believing priesthood; and is made over unto ministers in the congregational call and the ordination of the Church.

§ 4. *Ordination, the simple conveyance of authority, not of power*

It will be evident that, if the Church and world want a great company of preachers, they must be provided through a diligent use of every likely means to make men "mighty in the Scriptures." Our Lord pursued the same method in His "training of the twelve." Their three years' companionship with incarnate God was better education than any university could have given them; but universities have been following in Christ's footsteps, so far as they have tried to train preachers of the Gospel. It was this idea which Melanchthon uttered in his celebrated inaugural lecture at Wittenberg, when, as the rising Humanist fresh from his studies at Tübingen, he declared, "Theology must be studied by the aid of the Greek and Hebrew. When we go to the sources, then are we led to Christ. I shall begin my work with Homer and the Epistle to Titus."¹ It was only natural that men who valued so highly the new learning as a help towards Christ and the preaching of His gospel, should *not* lay any special stress on *ordination*. It is a remarkable fact that Melanchthon himself, although a Bachelor of Divinity, *never received ordination*. And yet we have at least one picture by Lucas Cranach of Melanch-

¹ Cf. *Philip Melanchthon, the Protestant Preceptor of Germany*, by J. W. Richard, D.D., New York. Putnam's Sons, 1898, p. 39.

thon baptizing an infant. It exists in the Parish Church of Wittenberg.¹ They had no idea of ordination being a gift of *power* without which the ministry could not be exercised effectively. In fact Luther traces the fitness for the office to the believer's baptism, that is to say, he sees in his personal acceptance of the Gospel and entry into the priesthood of believers the indispensable preparation for office in the Church of God.² No wonder, therefore, it is said that the Reformation "changed the idea of the Church, which was no longer conceived as existing in its sanctity apart from the people who composed it; but it was the congregation of faithful men, who by faith had appropriated the merits of the death of Christ. It was," continues this writer, "in the method of apprehending the significance of ordination, that the organization of the Protestant Churches revealed the influence of this principle. The Gospel of Christ, as the Reformers conceived it, consisted essentially in the proclamation of the message of deliverance from sin and its consequences by the atoning sacrifice of Christ, offered once for all. In response to the need for this proclamation, the preacher had appeared. But the qualification for the work of preaching the Gospel of truth could not be handed down in succession, or the gift imparted by any ministerial commission. It was one thing to empower a priesthood to offer the sacrifice of the Mass; it was another thing to fit the preacher for his task. In ecclesiastical language, the *matter* of ordination was now found in the call of the Spirit and His operation within the soul of the *ordinand*: the *form* lay in the imposition of hands, as the expressive symbol of recognition, before God and the people, of an antecedent divine act. Beneath this

¹ Cf. *Philip Melancthon, the Protestant Preceptor of Germany*, by J. W. Richard, D.D., New York. Putnam's Sons, 1898, p. 58 and p. 160.

² Cf. *Werke*, xl. s. 171.

conception of ordination, as also beneath other rites or sacraments, was the tacit assumption that the action of the Holy Spirit must have done its initial work in order to justify the human procedure."¹ Dr Allen mentions in a note the fact that the "Accipe Spiritum" ("Receive ye the Spirit") in the Latin ordinal, which the English ordinal has in this respect followed, was not introduced into it until the thirteenth century. We are led to the conclusion, therefore, that ordination confers simply authority to perform the duties of the ministerial office, not power to perform them. This must be got elsewhere. It should be an experience before ordination, conferred by the Lord Himself, the source of all authority and power in His Church. "The words 'power' and 'authority,'" says Dr Jacob, "though very distinct in meaning, have often been confounded together, and much confusion of thought and language has thereby ensued. When the distinction between them is borne in mind, and the erroneous notion of the ministry being a priesthood is eliminated, there will not be much difficulty in seeing that *authority* and not *power* is given by ordination."² The matter of ordination will thus be seen to be much simpler and less mysterious than the sacerdotalist desires to make it. Starting with his false assumption that the Christian minister is a sacrificing priest, who exercises mystic influence on sacramental elements, he seeks in a "sacrament" of ordination, or, if this is too pronounced, in the imparted "grace of holy orders," *power* which no previous training or prayer to God will impart. This is conveyed, he imagines, in the tactual contact which the imposition of episcopal hands is intended to convey. And so the mystery thickens round the simple ordinance as exercised by the apostles and their coadjutors. It is

¹ Cf. Dr Allen's *Christian Institutions*, Clark, Edinburgh, 1898, pp. 247, 248.

² Cf. *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, p. 116.

time the Protestant position in relation to ordination was cleared. The Reformers insisted on some evidence of a divinely-granted fitness before they proceeded to the ordination of the individuals. Thus Calvin says in his *Institutes*, "Those whom the Lord hath destined to so important an office, He first furnishes with those talents which are requisite to its execution, that they may not enter upon it empty and unprepared."¹ Ordination is consequently *recognition* of the divinely-imparted gift, and *authority* in consequence to exercise the ministerial office. In regard to the imposition of hands, Calvin points out that it is not enjoined by precept in the New Testament, but he thinks that it should be followed from the apostolic example. We may observe in passing that in the Scotch Reformation the imposition of hands was not regarded as the essential of ordination, and for some time ordinations took place without anything except the words of designation. The words alone were regarded as essential. And the formality is dispensed with in the ordination of elders, as distinguished from ministers, in some of the churches of Scotland and of America. But the imposition of hands, when carried out, should, Calvin thinks, be regarded as the devotion of the person to the service of God, just as persons were so devoted in the Old Testament times.² If this is the idea associated with the act, it becomes rational and impressive. The person on whom the hands are laid regards himself as in the act of ordination set apart to God's service in a very special way, the officer of that band of believing priests who live near to God, and are anxious by their selected minister to promote the Gospel and the kingdom. Their authority he accepts, and, in their name as well as the Master's, exercises his office.

¹ *Institutes*, book iv. ch. iii. § 11.

² *Ibid.*, § 16.

§ 5. *Protestantism committed to no doctrine of Apostolical Succession*

But now we are bound to notice the claim set up by many on utterly insufficient grounds of "apostolical succession." It would seem indeed an insult to ask men like Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin if their "orders" were valid. Melanchthon, as we have seen, never took ordination, and yet he exercised a never-to-be-forgotten ministry. Luther's view of ordination may be seen in his Letter to the Bohemians, who were anxious to administer the Lord's Supper in both kinds, and yet to preserve the succession. He wrote a letter to the Council of the city of Prague, showing how the Christian ministry arises from the needs of the Christian congregation, and requires no external authority, whether from Rome or elsewhere. It is plain, therefore, that although he had himself what would be regarded as valid "Roman orders," he set no store by these, but valued only his position as an "ambassador of Christ," recognised by the Christian people. Calvin occupied a similar position to Melanchthon. No evidence is forthcoming that he was himself ever ordained by the "laying on of hands," any more than Melanchthon. If this was the case, he must have regarded his calls to Geneva, to Strasburg, and then a second time to Geneva, as themselves sufficient evidence of his divine call to ministerial work. No one could produce better evidence that he was a minister of Christ. He was pressed into the service by the force of circumstances, and he became one of the greatest preachers and religious teachers of his own or any succeeding time. Of one thing, however, these mighty men were persuaded, that the "apostolical succession" is no necessity for the Christian Church.

It is well here to remember that the Council of Trent made "apostolical succession" a matter of faith, claiming

for the Church of Rome the true succession. Calvin, as we know, was the first to subject the canons of the Council to criticism, and in his case the criticism was scathing. In a subsequent tract on *The True Method of Giving Peace to Christendom and Reforming the Church*, he says upon the subject :—"As our mediators in delivering a formula of Reformation, after they have treated of Justification, came down to the Church, we must see how far any pious man, who is unwilling to abandon the truth, may be permitted to acquiesce in their decrees. The marks which they set down for discerning the Church, viz., pure doctrine, the right use of the sacraments, and the holy unity thereon depending, I willingly receive. But who perceives not what they add about the Succession of Bishops is cap-tiously said? We maintain, not without reason, that for several centuries the Church was so torn and dismantled that it was destitute of true pastors. We maintain that those who assumed the title to themselves were nothing less than pastors. Our mediators not only insist on wolves being regarded as shepherds, but affirm that the Church is not to be sought anywhere else than among them. We certainly deny not that the Church of God has always existed in the world, for we hear what God promises concerning the perpetuity of the seed of Christ. In this way, too, we deny not that there has been an uninterrupted succession of the Church from the beginning of the Gospel even to our day; but we do not concede that it was so fixed to external shows—that it has hitherto always been, and will henceforth always be, in possession of the Bishops. And how, pray, do they prove this to be necessary? No promise can anywhere be found. Nay, rather, when Peter admonishes us that there will be false teachers in the Church, as there were among the ancient people (2 Peter ii. 1), and Paul declares that Anti-Christ will sit in the temple of God (2 Thess. ii. 4), they point

not to foreign enemies who by violent irruption and for a little time disturb the Church : they speak of what is called the ordinary administration of Prelates, that no one might dream of a tranquil and flourishing state of the kingdom of Christ. Therefore, if the Church resides in the successors of the apostles, let us search for successors among those who have faithfully handed down their doctrine to posterity. I know that this continuous succession is extolled by Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, and some other ancient writers. But it is mere imposition to attempt to employ their testimony in defence of the tyranny of the Papacy, which has nothing in common with the ancient form of the Church. Irenaeus and Origen had to do with base miscreants, who, while they advanced monstrous errors, gave out that they had received them by divine revelation. This falsehood was easily refuted, as many were still alive who had been familiar with the disciples of the apostles. The remembrance of the doctrine which the apostles had delivered was recent. The very walls, in a manner, still re-echoed with their voice. Is it strange that those holy men cited as witnesses the Churches which had both been constituted by the apostles, and had, without controversy, retained their constitution ? Augustine was contending with the Donatists, who, inflated with frantic pride, boasted that they alone possessed the Church, though there was no reason why they should dissent from others. Augustine objects to them, that the Churches which they repudiated, and from which they had become schismatics, had flowed in uninterrupted succession from the apostles. This he did on the best grounds, as the Donatists acknowledged that these Churches had persevered in the doctrine which they had originally received. Very different is our case, for we deny the title of Successors of the apostles to those who have abandoned their faith and doctrine. Those perfidious mediators who confound light and dark-

ness are not ignorant how unlike, or rather how contrary, the present perverted government is to the ancient government of the Church. What effrontery, then, is it to use the name of the Church herself as a cloak for oppressing the Church? Would that the Succession, which they falsely allege, had continued until this day; with us it would have no difficulty in obtaining the reverence which it deserves. Let the Pope, I say, be the successor of Peter, provided he perform the office of an apostle. Wherein does Succession consist, if it be not in perpetuity of doctrine? But if the doctrine of the apostles has been corrupted, nay, abolished and extinguished by those who would be regarded as their successors, who would not deride their foolish boasting? By the same kind of argument I might prove that all tyrants have been the best supporters of freedom, since there was an uninterrupted transition from the republic to their monarchy. Whether it now be so let fact determine. But our mediators purposely endeavour to prevent this estimate from being made, by raising a prejudice in favour of the doctrine from the honour which they bestow on the persons. Briefly to conclude this part of our subject, we are in search of the Church of God. We all admit it to have been so propagated from the beginning as to have continued through an uninterrupted series of ages down to our day, and to be diffused at present over the whole world. Another question remains, viz., Is it tied down to persons? Although we see how perilous it is to admit this, still we are unwilling to be so very solicitous in taking precautions for the future. But when the name of the Church is usurped by those who, as far as in them lay, have utterly destroyed it, how dastardly were it not to reclaim at least against the present evil? Hilarius even in his time said that the Church rather lurked in caverns than shone conspicuous in primary sees. What lamentations can suffice to deplore the fearful devastation which stalks abroad everywhere in the present day? The

knowledge of the Church must therefore be sought elsewhere than from the titles of men, and in vain do we go round searching for it, while the truest method spontaneously presents itself. Who of us, to recognise a man, would look at his shoes or his feet? Why then, in surveying the Church, do we not begin at its head, seeing that Christ Himself invites us to do so? He says, 'Where the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together' (Matt. xxiv. 28). Wherefore, if we would unite in holding a unity of the Church, let it be by a common consent only to the truth of Christ."¹

Having thus realised the attitude of the chief Reformers to the "apostolical succession," it may be useful to show that it is *not* the doctrine of the Church of England. This is proved first from the wording of the twenty-third Article, "It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard." Here we have undoubtedly the same position taken up on this subject which we have found taken up by the Continental Reformers. It is the judgment of the existing Church expressed by its recognised officers which is to be carried out in the appointment of Christian ministers; and their call is in no way hampered by considerations of succession. Secondly, a statute of Queen Elizabeth, 1570, Anno. xiii. Reginæ Elizabethæ, c. 12, called "An Act for the Ministers of the Church to be of sound Religion" only requires those who had received Ordination in "any other form of Institution, Consecration, or Ordering" than that of

¹ Cf. Calvin's *Tracts*, vol. iii. pp. 264-266. *Con. et Dec. Conc. Trid.*, sess. xiii. c. iv.

the Church of England, to subscribe to the "Articles of Religion" in order to hold ecclesiastical preferment in this country; no objection at all being raised to the validity of such ordinations. Moreover for a hundred years after the beginning of the English Reformation, men who had received Presbyterian ordination were received into the Church of England without re-ordination and some of these obtained the highest preferment. Hooker, though maintaining Episcopacy to be the best and most desirable, never insisted on Episcopacy being essential, and asserted that ordination made without a Bishop may in some circumstances be allowed as very just and reasonable. It was only with Laud and his school that the fashion set in of pronouncing Episcopacy a necessity because of divine right, and of straining after a valid succession.¹

§ 6. *Apostolical Succession based on a mistaken interpretation of a single passage*

Timothy is represented as receiving a certain gift from God at his ordination by the laying on of the Apostle Paul's hands, and from this it is inferred that ordination may and should still be the transmission of a Divine gift, and for such a transmission the proper officers are the bishops believed to be "successors of the apostles." Now when we look carefully into the *Acts of the Apostles* we find that spiritual gifts were communicated to unordained persons by the laying on of apostolic and other hands. Thus Saul of Tarsus received sight and the gift of the Holy Ghost through the imposition of the hands of Ananias. Now no one believes that Ananias was an *apostle*, or that this private imposition of hands was *ordination*. Paul was ordained long afterwards at Antioch. (Acts ix. 10-18, xiii. 1-3.) Again when Paul re-baptized the twelve men at Ephesus, who

¹ Cf. Dr Jacob's *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, Appendix D, on "The Apostolical Succession"; Lathbury's *History of Episcopacy*, *ut supra*, p. 170, etc.

had never previously heard of the Holy Ghost, and conveyed prophetic and linguistic power by the laying on of his hands, we have no reason to believe he thereby *ordained* them to office in the Church (Acts xix. 1-7). Miraculous and spiritual gifts, it would seem, were imparted in the Apostolic Age by apostles and holy helpers, as the needs of the Church required, by the imposition of hands. But an ordination might take place without the gift, as when Paul and Barnabas were ordained at Antioch. They received no gift on this occasion, because they had already given proof of the requisite gifts for the mission to the Gentiles. In young Timothy's case, however, the special gift and the ordination synchronised. Let us see how the facts stand. In 1 Tim. iv. 14, we read "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." The gift came to him by prophecy, *i.e.* by express Divine direction. Who received the Divine direction to convey to Timothy the gift? Not the presbytery as a general body, but Paul in particular. And so another passage supplements the first (2 Tim. i. 6), in which Paul says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands (*διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου*)." The former passage tells us that the gift came to Timothy "with," *i.e.* "along with" (*μετὰ*), the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; but it came "by" (*διὰ*) the laying on of the hands of Paul. The facts are now clear. It was the touch of the miracle-working apostle which communicated to Timothy the gift, which he was to improve and stir up, not the touch of the ordaining presbyters. They only conveyed *authority* to exercise an office, Paul conveyed *power* to discharge its high duties. It will perhaps be said, 'Quite so; and may not the same arrangement take place still, those associated with the bishop giving through

their hands *authority*, the bishop by his superior endowments *power*?' Of course it is possible; but in such a case we are bound to apply the experimental method. Does episcopal ordination convey power, soundness in the faith, fitness for the ministerial office? Have there not been cases where ordination did not prevent heretical teaching and worse? Is it likely that ministerial gifts, power to preach, to win souls, to convert sinners, build up believers, reclaim backsliders, support the weak, comfort the sorrowing, would be sent down by the channel of ordination, or by the channel of education and experience? Of course, if there is a hazy hope of power to regenerate souls by the waters of baptism, and to nourish souls by transubstantiated bread, and to absolve sin as vice-gerents of God, then we can understand such powers being expected through ordination. But experience gives us no warrant for any such transmission of power. It is to sober experience, moreover, that we are happily committed in these days, and so we are bound to reject the theory of ordination which makes it the imparting of power; and the dogma of "apostolical succession," which is based upon it, should be left to the miracle-loving Church of Rome, from which it has been in recent times imported. It confers no real strength on any Church. It mystifies ministerial qualification and leads to the manufacture by ordination of a number of ministers whose subsequent deficiencies only demonstrate that they had received no qualification from God. Protestantism is in no wise committed to "apostolical succession" for its credentials; with its increasing staff of preachers proclaiming out of touched hearts a full gospel, it can abide the true test, "By their fruits ye shall know them."¹

¹ Cf. Jacob's *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, pp. 118-120; also *Apostolical Succession Overthrown and Evangelical Succession Established*, by a clergyman of the Established Church: London, James Nisbet & Co., 1854, *passim*; also Dr John Brown's *Apostolical Succession in the light of History and Fact*, London, 1898, *passim*.

CHAPTER XVI

PROTESTANTISM AND SACRAMENTAL EFFICACY

§ 1. *Christian Ministers not Sacrificing Priests*

WE have seen in last chapter that the Protestant movement recognised clearly the Church's need for Christian ministers, as distinguished from sacrificing priests. In a priesthood of all believers there is no room for any special priest except the High Priest, Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. The idea of sacerdotal gift is an anachronism. The idea that priests can manipulate either water or bread and wine, so as to convert them into extern instruments of salvation, is utterly alien to the Protestant spirit. The "sacerdotium," upon which so much stress is laid, which we have seen was regarded by Cardinal Newman as creating a new religion, is, we have every reason to believe, a pure hallucination. No such power can be communicated to priests; no such power has ever been communicated; the whole idea is a creation of the imagination, and is without a shadow of proof. "Holy water" has not been changed, except for the worse, by the consecrating process through which it has passed. "Wafers" have remained bread according to all common-sense tests after all transubstantiating words and signs have been furnished by the priest. It will help us to realise what sacramental efficacy means if we first see "holy water" and "the host" in the making. Here is the testimony of an eye-witness who had once belonged to the Church of Rome, but whose common sense forbade him to stay there:—"Con-

nected with the Basilica of St John Lateran at Rome is the baptistry said to have been built by Constantine in which to receive baptism from Pope Silvester. . . . Learning that there was to be a peculiar ceremony there of some kind, I sallied out on the morning of the 7th June to witness it in company with some friends. We entered the little gem of a building, and in its centre, beneath a cupola supported by columns, was a large antique urn, almost as large as a bathing tub, filled with water. Save a few ragged boys and beggars, myself and friends were the only persons yet present. Soon the voice of melody was heard in the direction of the church, which came from a bare-headed procession, dressed for the occasion, on its way to the baptistry. A sleepy bishop, that we had seen drowsing on former occasions, when boys were swinging their incense vases before him, brought up the rear, most guadily dressed, and with an umbrella held over his head. Singing, they entered the chapel, and surrounded the urn. The bishop read a little—then all sang and chanted. Thrice at intervals the bishop, with his hand, made the sign of the cross in the water, making quite a ruffle on its surface as he drew his hand through it; thrice, at intervals, he breathed into the water, commanding it at each time to receive the Holy Ghost. Then from a vessel like a coffee-pot, he poured oil into it in the form of a cross; and from another similar vessel, at a brief interval, he poured some other liquid into the tub, again in the figure of a cross. At another interval he took both vessels by the handles in his right hand, and bringing their spouts near together, he poured into the tub a little stream in the form of a cross, formed by the liquids from both vessels uniting. A powder something like fine salt was also cast into it. Then after mixing up all together, he washed his hands in the compound, which were most

reverently wiped by his attendants. Before putting them in the water, his hands were divested of their gloves and rings, and were most devoutly kissed; as was his crook when taken by his attendants. Thus common was changed into holy water.”¹ The details of the transubstantiation of the “wafer” of wheaten flour into “the body and blood of our Lord” are too numerous to be here given, but the words of consecration may be mentioned that we may realise what is supposed to take place. The officiating priest, after endless genuflexions and formalities, comes to the prayer of consecration and says of the wafer, “which oblation do Thou, O God, we beseech thee, vouchsafe to make hallowed, approved, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable that it be made for us the body and the blood of thy most beloved Son Jesus Christ, who the day before he suffered took bread into his holy and venerable hands, and with his eyes lifted towards thee, Almighty God his Father, giving thanks to thee, he blessed it, brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take and eat ye all of this, FOR THIS IS MY BODY.” Getting thus far with the prescribed bowing and crossing interspersed, the priest “holding the host between his aforesaid thumbs and forefingers, over the altar, the other fingers of both hands being joined together, and stretched out, *he kneels and adores the host.*” Then he raises it on high that it may also be adored by the people. We are thereupon asked to believe that the body and blood of Christ are brought down from heaven, where we believe His humanity now is, to be localised in a hundred “hosts” throughout the Church of Rome, and in the consecrated wafers adored! Now we have no evidence that either the “holy water” or the “holy wafer” has undergone the

¹ Cf. *Romanism at Home, Letters to Chief-Justice Taney*, by Kirwan, Edinburgh, 1852, pp. 38, 39.

least change through the dramatic ceremonial. So far as our sense-perception is concerned, they are just what they were before.¹

§ 2. *Sacraments not intended to absorb attention, but to direct attention to Christ*

It will be evident on the least thought that this consecration of water with a view to baptism, which is called by the name of "traselementation," tends to draw away the attention from Christ to the material sacrament. It raised, in fact, a new plan of regeneration in the Church. If water can be so transformed as to acquire saving efficacy, there is no longer any need for the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. A rival has arisen in the transfigured sacrament.

If, again, the "bread and wine" are transubstantiated into the veritable "body and blood of Christ," He will be forgotten instead of remembered, through being supposed to be present under the form of the consecrated host. The prostrated priest and prostrated people will necessarily forget the sacrifice offered on Calvary once for all, through absorption in the thought that the incarnate Christ is before them on the altar. Such a theory of sacramental efficacy does most grievous wrong to Jesus Christ. It interposes "holy water" and "consecrated hosts" between men's souls and Him, and of necessity leads them to think of the sacraments, rather than of the Saviour. Bilney of Ipswich, one of the English martyrs, in denouncing the worship and mediation of saints, said it was "a great blasphemy to the blood of Christ." He meant by this that it rendered the blood of Christ superfluous. We take the same exception to this theory of the sacraments. It is "a great blasphemy to the blood of Christ"

¹ Cf. Foye's *Romish Rites, Offices and Legends of the Church of Rome*, second edition, London, 1851, pp. 171-173.

—it raises a rival plan of salvation, and relegates the atoning work of Christ to the dim background, nay rather, puts it out of sight.

Now Protestantism rightly regards the sacraments as intended to direct attention to Christ, not to themselves. They are gospel messages in visible form. Baptism is meant to speak to the human spirit about Him who never baptized with water, because His prerogative is to baptize with the Holy Ghost. It is meant accordingly to speak to believing souls of the “washing of regeneration,” of the “renewing of the Holy Ghost,” which He alone can impart. The discerning, believing soul will not be content with the baptism with water, which in apostolic times was evidently performed by any of the disciples requested by the apostles; but will be reminded by it of the great underlying fact that only when CHRIST washes us are we clean; only then do we become whiter than snow (Ps. li. 2-7). The Eucharist again is meant to remind us of the sacrifice once for all accomplished on the Cross for our redemption; it carries us back to Calvary and the Passion; it emphasizes the death of shame by which our blessed Lord purchased our salvation. All this assertion of a present and repeated sacrifice, of an unbloody sacrifice to propitiate the Father can only abstract attention from the Saviour and His finished work, to occupy the mind with the sacerdotal addition which has been deemed necessary.

§ 3. *Sacraments not intended to become objects of faith, but helps to faith in Christ*

If the theory of the sacraments we are combating is followed out, it will be found that the consecrated elements really attract the faith of the recipients. It is not merely, as we have just seen, an abstraction of attention from Christ and His finished work; it is erecting a new object

of faith before distracted souls. If I am assured that baptism by a certain consecrated water washes the soul from original sin and whatever sin has preceded baptism, then I am constrained to *trust* in that "holy water" for cleansing. It is the sacrament I trust in, not necessarily do I trust in Christ at all. If again I am persuaded that the consecrated elements in the Eucharist contain the body and blood of Christ, I will trust in *them* as conveying to me Christ and the life-sustaining power, instead of trusting in Christ Himself and in Him alone. Now trust in a sacrament may be an unfortunate substitute for trust in Jesus Christ. How many of those who are reported as dying "fortified by the rites of the Catholic Church," and who have thereby shown their faith in a Church and her sacraments, have been able to go beyond this to the only trust which can save, that in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Faith in a Church and in a sacrament, we must remember, differs in kind, and not merely in degree, from faith in Christ. The Church and its sacraments become the soul's saviours, and Jesus becomes so far superfluous. And herein lies the danger of the whole sacerdotal idea about the sacraments. It may be said that the faith demanded is in the words of consecration. To take the Eucharist as illustration: "It is said, 'the peculiar and appropriate faith here is the faith of the words, "This is my body," "This is my blood."'" I believe," says Dr M'Leod Campbell, "that this assertion is not warranted. The faith proper to the ordinance, and in the exercise of which alone it has vitality, is the faith of that which the ordinance means and expresses, viz., the faith that Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and His blood drink indeed; and *not* the faith that this bread is Christ's flesh, and this wine is Christ's blood. But, assuming that the faith here called for is the faith of the assertion supposed to be made in the words, 'This is my body,' 'This is my

blood,' such faith is faith, not as to a spiritual truth spiritually discerned, but as to a physical mystery, not discerned, but assumed on authority. Such faith, supposing it to be required from us, is still manifestly distinct from the faith which apprehends the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The distinction, which I expect to be recognized when thus put, between the faith which receives a physical mystery and the faith which apprehends a spiritual truth, is a difference in kind, not in degree. The physical mystery seems greatest, in the form which the doctrine has in the Church of Rome. The measure of the corresponding faith called for is therefore greatest there also. But, as to modifications of Transubstantiation, under the name of Consubstantiation, or some other name yet undetermined, there is but a difference of degree, so long as it is held that the faith required from us, in partaking of this ordinance, is the faith of the assertion supposed to be contained in the words, 'This is my body,' 'This is my blood.' Say to me, 'You must believe that *literally* this is Christ's body,' or say to me, 'You must believe that *mystically* this is Christ's body,' the important fact remains, that what I am required to exercise is, a faith about the bread and the wine as the ordinance in which I receive Christ, and *not* a faith that simply contemplates Christ, and realises that He is my life."¹ A theory of the sacraments, therefore, which selfishly absorbs faith, instead of disinterestedly transmitting it to Christ as the All-sufficient and only Saviour, is at once condemned. It is not scriptural, and it is not Protestant. Nothing is clearer in the writings of the Reformers than the fact that they regarded the sacraments as gospel appendages. They may not have seen eye to eye on the sacramental question; but they were so far unanimous

¹ Cf. *Christ the Bread of Life*, by J. M'Leod Campbell, D.D., second edition, London, 1869, pp. 24-26.

that the sacraments were intended to lead us to Christ, instead of monopolising us for themselves.

§ 4. *Protestantism associates the Sacraments with the preaching of the Word*

The Word of God is with Protestants the primary means of grace. We have also seen that it is the Word of promise associated with the sacraments which gives them their validity and value. Accordingly we find the two sacraments, accepted by Protestants, administered, as a rule, in connection with some public service. And even when administered for special reasons privately, words of promise and of exhortation are very properly read and addressed from Scripture to those to whom the sacrament is administered. It will be found, we think, that when there is a desire or tendency to dissociate a sacrament from the Word read and preached, there is a view of sacramental efficacy entertained which is confused and misleading. Accordingly we find Luther declaring "Water, without the Word of God, is simply water and not baptism; but, when connected with the Word of God, it is a baptism, *i.e.* a gracious water of life, and a washing of regeneration."¹ And again regarding the Eucharist:—"Often have we said that the chief part in the sacrament is the Word of Christ, where He says: 'Take eat, this is my body, which is given for you,' etc. In these words, everything is found, that every Christian should know and maintain, and should not permit to be wrested from him by any other doctrine, even though it were that of an angel from heaven. They are words of life and salvation, so that to him who believes them, through such faith all sins are forgiven him, and he is a child of life, and has overcome hell and death. How great and mighty these words are, is inexpressible, for

¹ Luther's *Small Catechism*, 1529.

they are the sum of the entire gospel. Far more stress, therefore, is to be laid upon these words than upon the sacrament itself; and a Christian should accustom himself to regard these words rather than the sacrament. Erroneous teachers, however, have perverted this everywhere, so that the Word is disparaged before the people, and this faith vanishes, and the sacrament is converted into a mere external work without faith. When, then, you attach the less honour to the words than to the sacrament itself, it is a certain sign that you do not understand the sacrament aright.”¹ Calvin again in his definition of a sacrament is equally clear about the relation of the ordinance to the Word: —“Now, I think,” he says, “that it will be a simple and appropriate definition, if we say that it is an outward sign, by which the Lord seals in our consciences the promises of his goodwill towards us, to support the weakness of our faith; and we on our part testify our piety towards him, in his presence and that of angels, as well as before men. It may, however, be more briefly defined, in other words, by calling it a testimony of the grace of God towards us, confirmed by an outward sign, with a reciprocal attestation of our piety towards him. . . . There is never any sacrament without an antecedent promise of God, to which it is subjoined as an appendix, in order to confirm and seal the promise itself, and to certify and ratify it to us.”²

§ 5. *Protestantism ascribes sacramental efficacy to faith exercised in Christ, and not to the mere external act*

The Church of Rome insists on the external act producing of necessity the spiritual result. The Council of Trent anathematises anyone who denies that the sacraments confer grace *ex opere operato*, and who insists on faith in the

¹ *Von Anbeten des Sacraments, Werke*, xxviii. s. 390.

² *Institutes*, book iv. chap. xiv. § 1 and § 3.

Divine promise alone sufficing to secure it.¹ Her position is therefore clear. She believes she can regenerate men by baptism, and can convey Christ to them in the Eucharist, without requiring any faith on their part beyond the faith they may have in the Church, or the faith the parents or sponsors of children may have in the Church. That is to say, by this theory of the sacraments the Church constitutes herself the saviour of the world. She has got a monopoly of sacramental salvation, and the world must come to her properly constituted sacramental channels, if it is to be saved. How blasphemous the position! A Church proposing to become saviour in place of Jesus Christ! This theory materialises the sacraments, reduces the sacramental system to a system of mechanics, and places the credulous devotee at the mercy of the Church.

Now Protestantism has been a grand revolt against this theory of external sacramental efficacy. Without faith in Christ the sacrament in ordinary cases has no power. God may indeed operate *directly* on the minds of infants or on the minds of the imbecile to secure their salvation, should neither in this world reach the light of reason or of discretion. But even about such cases we may be certain that the spiritual result is *not* produced by mere external and physical applications, such as the Romish theory implies. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63). The sacrament administered in such cases may be regarded as a Divine assurance of salvation which God makes valid in His own good time. But in all other cases the sacramental efficacy is due to the faith of the recipient exercised upon Jesus Christ. We have already seen how decided Luther and Calvin were about the word of promise necessarily preceding the sacrament, and faith is the soul's response to the promise. So that we

¹ *Can. et Dec. Conc. Trid.*, sess. vii. can. viii.

cannot be safer than in accepting the very careful statement of the Westminster divines when they assure us—"The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them ; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of the Spirit and the word of institution ; which contains, together with a precept authorising the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers." ¹

¹ *Westminster Confession*, chap. xxvii. § 3.

CHAPTER XVII

PROTESTANTISM AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION

§ 1. *Transubstantiation, the very heart of the controversy with Rome*

WE have referred already to the statement of the late Cardinal Newman on the subject of the "Sacerdotium," but it will bear repeating. He says "Catholics and the Ritualists hold that in the Holy Eucharist, the Gospel priest offers Christ in His Body and Blood for the living and the dead, and that, by virtue of such an offering, he is a priest. . . . It constitutes a new religion. It is the formal cause, the constituting rite of the Catholic Church ; where it is not, there is no Church."¹ This claim is made by the Council of Trent, and the Church of Rome stands irrevocably committed to it, that her priests can bring the body and blood of our Lord into the "host" through consecration, and offer Christ, an unbloody sacrifice, for the remission of the sins of the living and the dead. The priest is believed to be endowed by his bishop in the "sacrament" of "orders" with this power to bring the body and blood of Christ down to the "altar," where after "adoration of the consecrated host" he can present the host as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead ! To this method of salvation the Church of Rome is committed ; she puts the sacrifice of the Mass in the very forefront of her services ; everything else is secondary to this ; and the hopes of millions are made to depend upon this miracle. The Greek Church follows Rome in adopting

¹ Preface to Hutton's *Anglican Ministry*, p. xiii.

the dogma. Indeed, it is not one miracle merely, but a whole galaxy; for Lessius, a recognized Jesuit theologian, has, in his work *De Perfectionibus Moribusque Divinis*, shown that the process involves no less than *twelve* special miracles.¹ Into these details we need not, however, enter. Is this claim of the Roman Church either scriptural or reasonable? As a matter of fact, has the delegation of such power to men ever been hinted at in Scripture or realized in practice?

§ 2. *Transubstantiation, unscriptural and absurd*

To understand the nature of this second sacrament we must go back to its institution. Fortunately we have in the Gospels and Epistles a clear account of what took place in the upper room when Jesus substituted for the Passover of Judaism the simpler memorial of Christianity. He was present in person, the presiding Host. When consequently He took a portion of the unleavened bread, and blessed and broke it, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. xi. 24), the assembled disciples could not possibly have imagined that the bread was changed into His body, or that there was to be any literal eating of His body that night. His body was there at the table. It did not vanish, change its place, or pass by any possibility into the persons of the men celebrating this first communion. All that our Lord meant, as the disciples must have understood it, was "This piece of bread *represents* my body, which is about to be broken for your redemption; take and eat it as a memorial of my dying love." The same idea must have been associated with the wine-cup. The wine had not become in any way His blood; it only *represented* His blood, and the drinking of the wine by all of them was an act of memorial that His blood was so shortly to be shed for their salvation.

¹ Lib. xii. c. 16, quoted by Gore in his *Dissertations*, p. 270.

As "symbols," the bread and wine were most appropriate; and, given after such gracious words of institution, they were also "seals" of remission and redemption. They were "visible words," as Augustine happily denominated them, speaking home to the hearts of the sorrowful and anxious men gathered round the first "table of the Lord." It was quite impossible for any other interpretation to be formed of our Lord's acts in the institution of the Supper.

But it is supposed that, by *assuming* the sixth chapter of John refers to the Eucharist, although of this there is no real proof, some colour for the Romish doctrine may be got from the directions Jesus gives about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Even when we grant that the flesh and blood of Jesus are to be the food of the soul, in what way must a *soul* partake? It cannot be literally, but figuratively. "The soul cannot eat Christ's flesh any other way than by believing on Him. It eats," says an able writer, "by the operation of its own powers, and not by the organs of the body; it eats by faith and not by teeth."¹ Moreover, it should be remembered that the words used by Christ at the institution were declarative and not imperative; He did not say "Let this bread become my body," but "This bread *is* my body," at that very time; so that by no torture can any miracle be manufactured out of them. "Surely," says Carson, "the blessing and not the declaration is the true consecration."²

Again, the *bodily* absence of Jesus in the subsequent celebrations of the Supper is implied in His direction to eat and drink "in remembrance of me" (Luke xxii. 19, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25). "*Remember,*" it has been very properly said, "respects the absent and the past. Your friend goes abroad, but leaves his picture with you, saying, 'keep this in

¹ Carson on *The Doctrine of Transubstantiation*, second edition, Dublin, 1836, p. 87.

² *Ibid.*, p. 91.

remembrance of me.' . . . We are commanded to remember Jesus himself. . . . Labour as you will, you will never make remembrance apply to one who is present."¹ We shall see presently in what sense Jesus is present at the Sacrament; but of one thing we may rest assured. The institution implies that He is not present *bodily*.

We wonder how such a doctrine as Transubstantiation ever came into existence in face of the facts about the institution of the ordinance. For it is absurd to the last degree. It asks us to believe that the body and blood of Jesus are brought down from Heaven, which, Scripture declares, had received Him until the times of the restitution of all things (Acts iii. 21), and are concentrated in a wafer, so that the "consecrated host" is to be adored as the "Eucharistic Saviour." In this way we are asked to believe Jesus continues His incarnation among men.² He is still present *bodily*, but it is in the "host." We ask for some sensible sign of this alleged transubstantiation. The evidence is all against it. "One day, a pope, Victor III., after having taken the contents of the chalice at mass, found that he was poisoned. Another time, an emperor, Henry VII., after having swallowed the host, experienced the same unpleasantness."³ He proceeds to ask if the blood and flesh of Jesus Christ are poisons. "If the bread and wine were changed into flesh and blood, how was not the poison changed too?" It has indeed been a favourite test with the controversialists to propose putting poison in one of the wafers and to stake the issue upon its being taken without any serious results after consecration; but the faith of the devotee has invariably given way here.

To help themselves out of the difficulty they ask us to

¹ Carson on *The Doctrine of Transubstantiation*, second edition, Dublin, 1836, pp. 97-100.

² So Möhler in his *Symbolik*, *ut supra*, s. 307.

³ Cf. Napoleon Roussel's Tract on *The Mass*.

distinguish between "substance" and "accidents," between "being" and "qualities." The "substance," they assure us, has been changed, while the "accidents," the qualities of bread and wine, remain. But this is only a roundabout way of telling us that our senses are not to be trusted in this matter; it is a "mystery" lying beyond the range of our sense-perception; we see only bread and wine, but Christ *is* there under the veil of the bread and wine. That is, we are to believe that a miracle has been wrought, although we have no proof whatever of it beyond the assertion of the Church! Could any position be more absurd? As a matter of fact, it makes the world at one stroke *unreal*. I am asked to doubt my senses that I may believe the Church! I am asked to let go my hold of an external world, to doubt the senses God has given me, that I may credit a Church with a miracle she cannot prove she has ever in one instance accomplished. No wonder that Archbishop Tillotson said, "If the testimony of *sense* is to be relied upon, then *Transubstantiation* is false; if it be not, then no man is sure that Christianity is true. For the utmost assurance that the apostles had of the truth of Christianity was the testimony of their own senses concerning our Saviour's miracles, and this testimony every man hath against Transubstantiation."¹

We cannot, even at the bidding of a Church, give up the exercise of our senses. We are bound to put the absurd doctrine to the experimental test. Poison, as we have seen, refutes it. We can test its worthlessness in the other direction. The "consecrated host" acts of necessity upon the soul of the recipient. "A fanatic fancied he should do a good work if he killed his king; but, in order to die in a state of grace, he chose first to receive the

¹ See his Sermon on *The Hazard of Being Saved in the Church of Rome*, folio edition of his works, London, 1707.

communion, then he went and thrust a poniard into his majesty's breast. The man had acted with a good intention, the sacrament had been administered to him according to the rules; how was it, then, that Jesus Christ, whom he had just eaten, did not enlighten and change his soul? Would you maintain," asks M. Roussel, "that the Saviour sanctioned an assassination?" And yet this is the absurdity into which this monstrous dogma leads its votaries.

§ 3. *Transubstantiation an awful degradation of Christ*

It places the body and blood of our Lord at the beck and call of a capricious priest, who may by some oversight or lack of intention mar the miracle proposed at the altar. Those of us, who love Christ and hope for His appearing, contemplate His coming again in the glory of the Father and with the holy angels. But here we are asked to believe that He comes whenever a priest summons Him, and imprisons Himself within a tiny wafer, and the chamber which contains it, under pitiful pieces of linen and silk, to be adored, and then eaten, and so identified with priest and people. What body and blood of Christ is it that undergoes this degradation? Not the body and blood broken and poured out on Calvary's Cross. That body passed through death, resurrection, and ascension to Heaven to remain there, as Peter assures us, until the times of the restitution of all things. It must be another body—nay, a multitude of other bodies—to meet the large demand for masses and "hosts" throughout Catholic Christendom! No wonder that the priest with his supposed miraculous endowment poses before credulity as the "creator of God," and fancies he has a right to regulate the advent of the Most High! Jesus endured humiliation when he was born in Bethlehem, cradled in a manger, and subject to mean conditions; but the humiliation of

the mass, we hesitate not to say, would, if it were true, be greater than the humiliation of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jerusalem; for it means that our glorified Redeemer should be couped up in a wafer, and then be eaten as by cannibals, and so identified *physically* with the credulous devotees of a Church! Möhler, of course, represents it as condescension upon His part. "His perpetual condescension," he says, "to our infirmity in the Eucharist." But what a reflection is thereby cast upon the sufficiency of the sacrifice on Calvary! A never-ending humiliation is here provided for Him whose humiliation ended in the tomb, and whose glorification began in the Resurrection. The whole idea is degrading to Christ. Not only is it physically an impossibility and absurdity—it is morally the most blasphemous indignity ever offered by human beings to the Saviour of mankind! No wonder Calvin speaks so indignantly of the whole procedure as "a fictitious metamorphosis, which is nowhere mentioned in Scripture," and yet is asserted "with as much superciliousness as if an hundred messages had been sent from heaven to confirm it. . . . Without enumerating the endless absurdities, or rather monstrous errors, which this Transubstantiation has produced, who that is at all pious, and duly instructed in the school of Christ, does not detest it, even on this account—that while the Supper of Christ has the property of raising us to heaven, no sooner is the persuasion settled in our minds that the bread is changed into the body of Christ than our thoughts, which ought to have risen to heaven, are immediately bent down to earth? Christ invites us to himself. As we cannot climb so high, he himself lends us his hand, and assists us with the helps which he knows to be suited to us, and even lifts us to heaven, as it is very appropriately expressed by those who compare the sacraments to ladders. Suppose now, as these men insist, that what is seen on the

sacred table is not bread but Christ inclosed, who will not remain fixed down both in mind and body to earth, when he thinks he possesses Christ? In this way the sign which ought to have employed each bodily sense in raising the mind above the heavens, keeps it bound by the bodily senses under the elements of the world. Here I only express what has notoriously happened. How few will be found in the papacy who do not gaze so stupidly on the outward sign as to forget that Christ is to be sought amid the glories of heaven!"¹

§ 4. *Transubstantiation degrades the Priesthood into visionaries of a most dangerous type*

The progress of the world in one aspect is due to visions and to visionaries. Men see what others do not, and proceed in dependence upon the higher Powers to realise their visions. Accordingly we find the wise man declaring, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. xxix. 18). But in such a case the vision must be according to truth. It is quite otherwise when the vision is a pure hallucination as in the case before us. The priests of the Church of Rome are compelled to believe that they can perform a miracle of which they give us no proof, a miracle which has no existence outside the imagination of the Church. The only parallel for these men's unfortunate position is to be found in bedlam, where those bereft of reason fancy they are exercising imperial powers and doing wonders! Nothing but mental degradation can result from such a position. Every priest at the altar is directed by the Church to believe that he can bring the glorified Christ down in bodily condition to the pitiful and humiliating state involved in the "consecrated host" which is destined to go to pieces in the mouths of men. He must believe in this miracle of perpetual humiliation for his Master; in this crude suspicion cast upon the sufficiency of

¹ Cf. Calvin's *Tracts*, vol. iii. pp. 279, 280.

the atoning sacrifice on Calvary. He is thus committed to a gigantic delusion; and is it to be supposed a visionary, educated in this way, can come through the process scathless? He becomes of necessity a visionary of a dangerous type. He has lost his grip of the reality of things. His senses are suspected; his imagination is believed and stimulated; he lives in a world of dreams, and is himself commander of the whole. It is indeed difficult to speak moderately of the gigantic delusion. No wonder it has been called the "great anti-Christian lie" and a "ridiculous dogma." "Doctor Reid," says a writer, "began [in his refutation of David Hume] at the foundation; questioned, discussed, refuted the theory of perception; vindicated the authority of the evidence of the senses as a first principle that disdains proof as it defies refutation, and thus restored to us the world of matter and mind, which had been annihilated by a frantic hypothesis. By an irresistible appeal to the common sense of mankind, he swept away the foundations of scepticism, and put extravagance itself to shame. Such systems, he shows, are not philosophy but lunacy. There is a species of lunacy, he observes, called hypochondria, in which the unhappy person affected with the disease does not believe his senses. A man will think his legs are made of glass. Those who deny the authority of the senses from the influence of philosophical theory, he calls metaphysical lunatics. The disbelief of the senses in the mass appears to be a species of lunacy of the same kind, and may with great propriety be denominated *popish lunacy*."¹

§ 5. *Transubstantiation degrades also the unity secured by the Church*

There is much made of the unity secured by the Church of Rome. We can at this stage in our study estimate its value. It proves itself to be an external, superficial thing. For what this particular Church proposes to do is to unite

¹ Cf. Carson, *ut supra*, pp. 32, 33.

men in Christ in an outside, mechanical fashion. They are commanded to come to the Church to receive Christ in the form, or under the species of bread. It is easy to do this. Assassins, as we have seen, have been known to do this, to give their diabolic work some odour of sanctity. But when you have got crowds of devotees all united to Christ by passing through their mouths the "consecrated host," of what moral value is such unity? It is unity in believing a monstrous miracle which has no existence outside of the imagination of the Church. It is a unity in abject submission to the hallucination of men who pose as miracle-workers, and deceive themselves. The unity is superficial, mere party spirit, compatible with deception, persecution, anything in fact, which Jesuit casuistry insinuates may be helpful to mother Church. Protestantism has nothing to fear in face of such a unity. It cannot last for ever. A day is bound to come when truth and common sense and open-dealing and righteousness will prevail over falsehood and hallucination and underhand-dealing and unrighteousness. And this day the profounder unity of Protestantism will assuredly hasten. In the meantime it is surely well to expose the superficiality and pretentiousness of this unity of Rome. There has been, as already hinted, since the time of Möhler and his *Symbolik*, a tendency to represent the Church as an extension of the Incarnation. Christ has been supposed to incarnate Himself once more in the great organism of His Church, which is to be generously taken as being what He was in the world. But if this ecclesiastical incarnation is accomplished by the reception of the "host," in this carnal, outside, physical fashion, it becomes the hollowest of all pretences. There is no guarantee that any Christ-likeness will be realised through the monstrous miracle of the mass. There is every probability that the likeness to Him who was so meek and lowly in heart will be

altogether missed. His life on earth, His death on Calvary, His resurrection and His reign, "salvation facts" as we Protestants regard them, are by the Romanists thrust into the background that His present incarnation on the altar and in the bodies of men may be appreciated. Though our Lord expressly warns us against supposing that, as Christ, He will be here and there, in lonely desert or in secret chambers (Matt. xxiv. 26); the Church of Rome maintains He is with her, and multiplies Messiahs to meet the demand for masses throughout Roman Catholic Christendom! The historic Christ recedes, that the bogus incarnation may have free course and be glorified. Such an incarnation is simply a wild delusion.

"Christ on the Cross," says Möhler, "has offered the sacrifice for our sins. But the incarnate Son of God, who hath suffered, died, and risen again from the dead for our sins, being, according to his own teaching, present in the Eucharist, the Church from the beginning hath, at his command (Luke xxii. 20), substituted the Christ mysteriously present and visible only to the spiritual eye of faith, for the historical Christ, now inaccessible to the corporeal senses.¹ The former," he continues, "is taken for the latter, because the latter is likewise the former—both are considered as one and the same; and the eucharistic Saviour, therefore, as the victim also for the sins of the world. And the more so, as, when we wish to express ourselves accurately, the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is put only as a part for an organic whole. For his whole life on earth—his ministry and his sufferings, as well as his perpetual condescension to our infirmity in the Eucharist—constitute one great sacrificial act, one mighty action undertaken out of love for us, and expiatory of our sins, consisting indeed of

¹ Of course we Protestants deny that Christ is under any promise to be present *in* the Eucharist, nor has the Church from the beginning, but only in comparatively recent times substituted a Christ of mystery for the Christ of history.

various individual parts, yet so that none by itself is, strictly speaking, the sacrifice. The will of Christ, to manifest his gracious condescension to us in the Eucharist, forms no less an integral part of his great work than all besides, and in a way so necessary, indeed, that whilst we here find the whole scheme of redemption reflected, without it the other parts would not have sufficed for our complete atonement. Who, in fact, would venture the assertion that the descent of the Son of God in the Eucharist belongs not to his general merits, which are imputed to us? Hence the sacramental sacrifice is a true sacrifice—a sacrifice in the strict sense, yet so that it must in no wise be separated from the other things which Christ hath achieved for us, as the very consideration of the end of its institution will clearly show. In this last portion (if we may so call it) of the great sacrifice for us, all the other parts are to be present and applied to us; in this last part of the objective sacrifice, the latter becomes subjective and appropriated to us. Christ on the Cross is still an object strange to us; Christ, in the Christian worship, is our property, our victim.”¹ No wonder that the Reformers revolted from such views, and denounced the mass as robbing Christ of His glory in having presented the atoning sacrifice once for all. This ingenious attempt to secure part of the merit of atonement by bringing Christ down to be our victim and a constantly repeated offering on the altar is bound to fail, and to be rejected when the devotees of Rome awake to common sense.

§ 6. *Transubstantiation commits the Church of Rome to a policy of manufactured miracle*

The Church of Rome takes her stand before the world upon a miracle—the never-ending miracle of the mass. We have already seen that it can stand no test applied by common sense to it. It requires us to disbelieve our senses in order to believe it. It has not saved men from being

¹ Cf. *Symbolik*, s. 302-310.

poisoned by the "host"; the reception of the host has not preserved men from sacrilege and sin. The experiment has failed on both sides. And yet the Church still stands unabashed before the world, and maintains its miraculous and sacerdotal powers. The inevitable result of this is the degradation of the Church. She is committed to the miraculous, and she gravely asks this nineteenth century not only to accept without proof the miracle of the mass, but the long array of "ecclesiastical miracles" which seem designed, like the apocryphal writings in relation to the Canon, to set off by contrast the miracles of Scripture! The Church has to betake herself of set purpose to miracle-mongering. Alleged miracles crop up periodically, not in character philanthropic so much as politic and expedient, to rehabilitate the Virgin and saints who are patronised more particularly by the Church. We shall refer in next chapter to modern miracle and its relation to Protestantism. Romanism, alas, is committed to it inextricably. Nothing but credulity can face the manufactured miracle this particular Church provides!

§ 7. *Protestantism is committed to no doctrine of the Real Presence of our Lord's Body and Blood in or with the elements as a basis of sacrifice, but recognises Him as presiding in the midst of His people*

Protestants are unanimous in rejecting Transubstantiation. It is too gross a hallucination to be compelled to believe that a consecrated wafer, which to the tests of sense remains the same, has yet been changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. But there are some who think that the Body and Blood of Jesus are behind the consecrated elements, and given along with them. The word "Consubstantiation" has been applied to this view, although such a word never occurs in the works of Luther. He could not shake himself free from the idea that the words of institution are an assurance of the gift of the Body along

with the bread. But he altogether repudiated the idea of the sacrament being a sacrifice. "In marked contrast with the mediæval theory, Luther taught," says his most recent biographer, "that the sacraments were not rites, in which man brought something to God, but that they were institutions and acts of God, in which he offered and conferred the grace of the Gospel."¹ Thus Luther says, "In the Mass we give nothing to Christ, but only receive from Him." And in another place, "The Mass is nothing but the Divine promise or testament of Christ, commended by the sacrament of His Body and Blood."² It is, we think, most important that Luther's position should be clearly defined. One would imagine from references to his Marburg Conference with the Swiss Reformers that he was contending for something like the doctrine of the Real Presence as held by the Tractarian School. But at their sacrificial idea Luther would have stood aghast. He would have regarded their contention that there is a sacrifice presented to God in the Eucharist as treason to the all-sufficiency of the Saviour's sacrifice. The Reformers were unanimous regarding this most important point that the sacrament cannot be made a sacrifice. Their attitude has been powerfully presented by Calvin when in his *Tract* urging the people no longer to attend the mass he says: "Every believer should be aware that the mere name of Sacrifice (as the priests of the Mass understand it) both utterly abolishes the Cross of Christ and overturns his sacred Supper, which he consecrated as a memorial of his death. For both, as we know, is the death of Christ utterly despoiled of its glory, unless it is held to be the one only and eternal Sacrifice; and if any other Sacrifice still remains, the Supper of Christ falls at once, and is completely torn up by the roots, its only use being as a

¹ Cf. Jacobs' *Martin Luther*, *ut supra*, p. 373.

² Cf. Quotations in Jacobs, *ut supra*.

token, and as it were a seal of that one oblation. . . . What ! are you, to whom it is not lawful to glory in anything but the Cross of Christ—when you see conspirators met to extinguish its glory, to cut down and overturn its testimony—are you to league yourself along with them ? ”¹

It will be useful also to point out here that the doctrine of the Real Presence and of the Eucharist being a sacrifice, as maintained by members of the Church of England, is in defiance of the Articles and of the strict terms of the Communion office. It is expressly said in Article XXVIII., which was framed to refute Transubstantiation, that “the Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was not by Christ’s ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.” If “eucharistical adoration” is not here forbidden, how could the matter be guarded against more clearly ? Then in Article XXXI. we find the following warning against the idea of eucharistic sacrifice : “The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual ; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.” How in face of such statements the doctrine of the Real Presence and the eucharistic sacrifice can be entertained is more than we can imagine.² In reply to the theory, we

¹ *Tracts*, vol. iii. p. 383.

² On the whole subject see *The Real Presence and the Sacrifice of the Eucharist*, by Walter Kerr Hamilton, Bishop of Salisbury, a Charge delivered in May 1867 ; and in answer *The Lord’s Supper in its Scriptural and Sacerdotal Aspects*, by Archdeacon J. C. Martin, D.D. Enlarged edition, London, 1869.

may say that it has not a particle more evidence in its favour than Transubstantiation has. It withstands all the tests of common sense. To represent the body and blood of Jesus Christ as multiplied in the way supposed, and then adored, and then presented as a sacrifice is a mere modification of the mass. It is entertained by men who have no sympathy with Protestantism as such, and is a feeble imitation of Rome.

We have spoken of the association of Christ's body with the "consecrated host" as a degradation of Christ. No amount of "eucharistical adoration" will redeem the idea from being real sacrilege. To think that Christ's bodily presence is to be brought down from heaven at the nod of a priestling, that a supplementary sacrifice may be set up on the altar, is to throw suspicion on the sufficiency of the sacrifice on Calvary. Why look for Christ's presence in or with the elements at all, when He directs us to do it in remembrance of Him, that is, in remembrance of One who is absent in *body*? His body has been received into heaven until the times of the restitution of all things. But this is not to hinder us recognising our Lord's Presence as in the midst of His assembled worshippers. Why should He not be regarded as *presiding* at each celebration of the Supper, just as He did at the first celebration? It has been noticed that He was accustomed to take up the position of host even when He began as guest. He did so at the marriage of Cana; He did so at the meal at Emmaus. Let us believe He does so still. Why should we not look past the celebrant in every case, the mortal minister, and take the bread and wine from the hands, so to speak, of the immortal Master? Communion with Him will in such a case be severed from all superstition, and we shall keep the feast in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Then may we say, with the poet,

“Here O my Lord, I see Thee face to face ;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen ;
Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God ;
Here drink with Thee the royal wine of heaven ;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

This is the hour of banquet and of song,
This is the heavenly table spread for me ;
Here let me feast, and feasting, still prolong
The brief, bright hour of fellowship with Thee.

Too soon we rise ; the symbols disappear ;
The feast, though not the love, is passed and gone ;
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here ;
Nearer than ever ; still my Shield and Sun.

I have no help but Thine ; nor do I need
Another arm save Thine to lean upon.
It is enough, my Lord, enough, indeed ;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

I have no wisdom, save in Him who is
My wisdom and my teacher, both in one ;
No wisdom can I lack while Thou art wise,
No teaching do I crave, save Thine alone.

Mine is the sin, but Thine the righteousness ;
Mine is the guilt, but Thine the cleansing blood ;
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace ;
Thy blood, Thy righteousness, O Lord my God.

I know that deadly evils compass me,
Dark perils threaten, yet I would not fear,
Nor poorly shrink, nor feebly turn to flee ;
Thou, O my Christ, art buckler, sword, and spear.

But see, the pillar-cloud is rising now,
And moving onward through the desert-night ;
It beckons and I follow, for I know
It leads me to the heritage of light.”¹

¹ Bonar's *Hymns of Faith and Hope*, new edition, 1867 pp. 68, 69.

CHAPTER XVIII

PROTESTANTISM AND MODERN MIRACLES

§ 1. *The Church of Rome, committed to Imaginary Miracles*

WE have seen how the dogma of Transubstantiation commits the Church of Rome to multiplied miracles which have no existence outside the imagination of her devotees. The miracles are imaginary. But the idea of the miraculous as a "Note of the Church" had been long entertained; and although Transubstantiation as a full-blown dogma did not find expression until the Council of Lateran in 1215, its growth can be traced for centuries before."¹ The idea of Churchmen had evidently been what Cardinal Newman expresses so naïvely in his *Apologia*, "Miracles are the kind of facts proper to ecclesiastical history, just as instances of sagacity or daring, personal prowess, or crime, are the facts proper to secular history."² Accordingly if the Church could persuade the world that she is working miracles daily at her altars in the transubstantiation of the bread and wine, she must carry conviction of her supernatural claims by a regular *tour de force*. Along with the climax of miraculous power at her altars, moreover, there had been growing up a literature of the miraculous in the shape of "Ecclesiastical Miracles," said to have been performed by the saints down the centuries. Into any

¹ Cf. Dr. Charles Hebert's *The Lord's Supper; Uninspired Teaching from A.D. 74-1875*, two vols., London, 1879; also Canon Gore's *Dissertations, ut supra*, pp. 230-268.

² Cf. edition of 1869, p. 299.

detailed statement about these miracles we need not enter, especially as Cardinal Newman has devoted a volume to their consideration. His summary will be quite sufficient. The very best specimens he can call out of the repertory of the Church are : (1) The Miracle of the Thundering Legion, a legion composed of Christian men under Marcus Aurelius Caesar who prayed in their extremity and got as answer thunderbolts to disperse their enemies, and rain for themselves to save them from perishing of thirst ; (2) the change of the water of the well near Jerusalem into oil at the prayer of St Narcissus, that the lamps on the vigil of Easter might be filled and so kept from failing ; (3) the change of the course of the Lycus, a raging torrent, through the prayer of St Gregory Thaumaturgus, and the fixing of the saint's staff at the point of danger, which in due time grew into a tree ; (4) the appearance of the Cross in the sky to Constantine, when on march to Rome ; (5) the discovery to St Helena, mother of Constantine, of the locality of the Holy Cross at Jerusalem ; (6) the sudden death of Arius on the eve of his restoration to the fellowship of the Church at the command of Constantine, and in answer to the prayer of Alexander the bishop, who would be no party to his restoration ; (7) the fiery eruption which prevented Julian's attempt to rebuild the Jewish temple ; (8) the recovery of a blind man, who happened to touch the relics of St Gervasius and St Protasius as they were being carried by St Ambrose for the dedication of a new Church in Milan ; and (9) the power of speech continued to certain African confessors, sixty in number, who had been deprived of their tongues by the King of the Vandals. The enumeration of these nine ecclesiastical miracles will, we think, be sufficient to throw suspicion upon them. As a matter of fact the last of them has been taken out of the category of the miraculous by the demonstration of the fact

that while taking a *portion* of the tongue away may destroy the power of speech, the excision of the whole will not prevent the sufferer making himself intelligible. We have, moreover, only to read Newman's volume with care to see how utterly "visionary" the whole process has been by which he has brought himself to believe in these miracles. Dr E. A. Abbott has in his *Philomythus; an Antidote against Credulity*, subjected Newman's volume to a most searching and scathing criticism, the result of which will, with every candid reader, go to prove that the Cardinal is "left without a leg to stand upon." His defence of "ecclesiastical miracles" is the purest superstition.

§ 2. "*Scriptural Miracles*" may very easily be distinguished from "*Ecclesiastical Miracles*"

Now it will be found that the miracles of Scripture were all wrought with an evidential purpose. They were to confirm a divine message. The miracle-worker is recognised as a "teacher come from God." The miracle was the divine seal upon the doctrine. Nicodemus revealed the whole meaning of the scriptural miracles when he said to Jesus, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John iii. 2). We may have a "wonder" separated from all instruction. A conjurer can give us this, and we go to be amused, not instructed by him. But God's wonders have been fore-runners of His words; His messages are associated with His miracles; the divine teaching accompanies the divine touch. Accordingly we find that Jesus conferred upon His apostles and evangelists the gift of miraculous power; and the apostles had also the power of conferring the gift upon others. "This power, however," it has been said, "was not exercised in every instance of the laying on

of their hands, but only in special cases, when the act was performed with an express design to impart miraculous gifts, as may be seen from a careful perusal of the *Acts of the Apostles*. . . . That these supernatural communications should be extended beyond the persons and lives of the apostles, was necessary for the accomplishment of the very design for which they were originally given; for the great principles of the Christian faith had much to contend with at the period of their early promulgation. Besides, they were to be diffused abroad, in countries remote from the scene of those transactions to which the first miracles bore witness; and, therefore, until the New Testament Scriptures were *entire*, and brought into such a form as to furnish a universal and unerring standard of judgment and appeal, sustained by its own cumulative and *complete* evidence, it was wisely and graciously appointed that miracles should still be wrought, whenever the exigency of the case required it, either for the substantiating of apostolic doctrine, or the silencing of infidel objections. The books of the New Testament, *as a complete Canon*, were known to Origen, who flourished about one hundred years after the death of the Apostle John; and it is a very remarkable circumstance, that, though most of the original writings of this great and learned man have perished, his catalogue of those books has been preserved by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History. This fact is important, as it exhibits the coincidence in point of time, between the collection of the books of the New Testament into a whole, and the cessation of all miracles of an unquestionable character. It is worth while to pause here, in order to notice the beautiful harmony of the divine procedure towards the Church, on different occasions. The Mosaic dispensation was to be superseded by a brighter and better system; but its institutions

were not abruptly set aside, without any tender regard to the long-cherished prepossessions of a people, who were, in some sense, commendably jealous of any disparagement of their rudimental services; on the contrary, their ancient ritual was gradually thrown into the shade, by the introduction of 'the heavenly things themselves,' of which that ritual afforded only 'the patterns,' until, by an almost imperceptible decay, the first covenant 'waxed old and vanished away' (Heb. viii. 13; ix. 23). In like manner, those 'signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,' which had been equally appointed of God, 'according to His own will,' for a specific purpose, were to be discontinued when that purpose was effected, namely, the confirmation of the Gospel (Heb. ii. 3, 4); but they were not suddenly withdrawn, leaving the Church to mourn an unsupplied deficiency, an uncompensated bereavement. No; they ceased gradually, as the gifted saints passed, one after another, into the world of spirits; and, when they wholly disappeared, the Church was in possession of that written treasure, *the Bible*, which, by its continuance unimpaired and uncorrupted, during so many centuries, amidst the fire of persecution, the malice of infidelity, and the rage of hell, presents to the world a *standing miracle* of daily obviousness, in comparison of which the thaumaturgical pretensions of Rome and Russia, France and Britain, appear like the puny efforts of the magicians, in the presence of the divinely constituted legislator of the Jews."¹

Moreover, there is a gravity and dignity about the scriptural miracles which we altogether miss in the ecclesiastical. When we are told about the consecrated bread changing into a live coal in the hands of a woman

¹ Cf. Essay on 'Miracles' in *Modern Fanaticism Unveiled*, second edition, London, 1834, pp. 50-54.

who came to the Lord's Supper after offering incense to an idol; of the dove issuing from the body of Polycarp at his martyrdom; of the petrification of a fowl dressed by a person under a vow of abstinence; of the exorcism of a demoniac camel; of the stones shedding tears at the barbarity of the persecutions; of inundations rising up to the roofs of churches without entering the open doors; and of pieces of gold, as if fresh from the mint, dropped from heaven into the laps of Italian monks, we revolt from the idea of such miracles being genuine or divine. They are too ludicrous to have any place in a system of sober religion.

Accordingly, when no single promise can be produced of the permanence of miraculous powers, or of a Church being identified by their possession, we instinctively recoil from them as beyond belief.

3. *Protestantism naturally became sceptical of the miracles of the Romish Church*

It must be noted that Luther did not relinquish his faith in the miraculous suddenly or easily. In his *Instructions concerning Some Articles*, published in 1518, about the time of the Leipzig Disputation, he declares his belief that miracles are still performed at the tombs of the saints. But later on we find him launching out against the legends, which he declares to be "abominable; for they (the Friars and hermits) have many strange, horrible, and lying miracles and fooleries, touching wonderful moderation, chastity, and nurture." "It was one of the devil's proper plagues," he says in another place, "that we have not so much as one legend of the saints pure and true; they are stuffed so full with lies, that without heavy labour they cannot be truly corrected."¹

¹ Cf. *Tischreden*, Halle, 1743, cap. liii. s. 1991, 1993.

That Calvin entertained the same view of ecclesiastical miracles may be seen from his *Commentary on Second Thessalonians*, where, on chap. ii. 9, we find him saying: "For after having spoken of the *working* or *efficacy* of Satan, he marks it out particularly when he says *in signs and lying wonders, and in all deceivableness*. And assuredly, in order that this may be opposed to the kingdom of Christ, it must consist partly in false doctrines and errors, and partly in pretended miracles. For the Kingdom of Christ consists of the doctrine of truth and the power of the Spirit. Satan, accordingly, with the view of opposing Christ in the person of his Vicar, puts on Christ's mask, while he, nevertheless, at the same time chooses armour with which he may directly oppose Christ. Christ, by the doctrine of his gospel, enlightens our minds in eternal life; Antichrist, trained up under Satan's tuition, by wicked doctrine, involves the wicked in ruin; Christ puts forth the power of his Spirit for salvation, and seals his gospel by miracles; the adversary, by the efficacy of Satan, alienates us from the Holy Spirit, and by his enchantments confirms miserable men in error. He gives the names of *miracles of falsehood*, not merely to such as are falsely and deceptively contrived by cunning men with a view to impose upon the simple—a kind of deception with which all papacy abounds, for they are a part of his power which he has previously touched upon; but takes falsehood as consisting in this, that Satan draws to a contrary end works which otherwise are truly works of God, and abuses miracles so as to obscure God's glory. In the meantime, however, there can be no doubt that he deceives by means of enchantments—an example of which we have in Pharaoh's magicians." This scepticism about Romish miracles was natural in the Reformers, and it put Protestantism of necessity into a critical attitude towards all

miracles. We may regret that the critical spirit led some to doubt the supernatural altogether, and to reach such a conclusion as that miracles are impossible. This has been shown by the apologists to be unscientific; but what we are here concerned with is the fact that it was the natural reaction after the "lying wonders" of Rome.

Moreover, Protestantism has not confined itself to the imaginary miracles of Rome. It has denounced the "modern miracles" which enthusiasm has furnished, and furnished sometimes in connection with evangelistic work. The general conviction of the Protestant Church is that miracles ceased about the time of the completion of the Canon. We cannot fix the precise moment of their cessation, because, as already observed, it was natural they should not abruptly cease. But once the Canon was completed and the inspired Book had got a firm footing in the world, miracles seem to have ceased. Accordingly it has been Protestant and believing critics who have rebuked the enthusiasm of their less thoughtful fellows who were tempted to add to the "imaginary miracles" of the Church. A writer already quoted furnishes an excellent example of the calm Protestant spirit in dealing with a number of "imaginary miracles" which occurred in connection with a revival season in the West of Scotland. He proceeds to give the following tests for spurious miracles:—"1. Miracles are extremely suspicious when the individual pretending to them, and the subject on whom the work is wrought, are persons of ardent imagination and extravagant fancy. 2. Miracles may infallibly be regarded as spurious when the person pretending to them has never wrought one positive indisputable act of the kind. 3. Miracles may be regarded as spurious when attempts fail before the pretension to miraculous power is fully

substantiated. 4. Miracles may be regarded as spurious when they are employed to prove anything, either inconsistent with written revelation, or so trifling in its nature as to be unworthy of the divine interposition in a way of supernatural manifestation; and, 5. miracles may be regarded as spurious when there is evidently no occasion for them." He illustrates these five points at considerable length. We content ourselves with quoting part of what he says on the last. After speaking of the doctrinal and saving truth contained in Scripture, he continues: "Can anyone, in the broad view of these revealed truths, charge us with arrogance for maintaining the *sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures*? It would not be deemed either presumptuous or gratuitous to affirm that there is no occasion for another sun, emerging from the western horizon, to assist our solar orb in its luminous course from the east, and to pour fresh floods of light on the already irradiated scenes of nature. The spirit of such assertions would be decidedly reprehensible, if couched in a form that should seem to prescribe limits to the power or sovereignty of the Most High. But when we say that the *fulness* of divine communication in the sacred Scriptures supersedes the necessity of further visions, and private revelations, and all kinds of miraculous interposition, the sentiment, so far from being derogatory to the Great Head of the Church, is honourable alike to his wisdom and liberality. It also reflects the highest dignity on the Bible, as the work of the Spirit, by whose inspiration 'the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations is now made manifest to his saints,' and so fully displayed in all 'the riches of its glory' as to render it impossible for the pseudo-miracles of the nineteenth century to add anything either to its purport or validity." ¹

¹ Cf. *Modern Fanaticism Unveiled*, *ut supra*, pp. 73-105.

§ 4. *Protestantism looks for the Divine finger in the experiences of the soul rather than in the experiences of the senses*

Luther declared "These are the greatest of all miracles, that God through his Word makes our souls alive, that he will make our bodies to live at the last day, that he baptizes us in his blood, and so washes away our sins that he daily vanquishes hell, death, sin, and the law."¹ In believing the physical miracles have ceased, we have abundant compensation in the thought that through His Word and Spirit God is working greater wonders in the regeneration and sanctification of souls than He ever wrought in the days of His flesh or in the apostolic age. Protestantism has its sphere of divine manifestation, but it is that of spiritual experience. It does not encourage visionaries to peer into a transubstantiated wafer until they fancy they see God; but it encourages us to so study the Word as to see wondrous things in God's holy law, and to so receive the exceeding great and precious promises that we shall become partakers of the divine nature (Ps. cxix. 18; 2 Pet. i. 4). Regenerated, adopted, sanctified, we shall then have in our experience such touches of the Unseen Hand as will help us to appreciate the meaning of those miracles of Scripture, whose evidence criticism is really making clearer. "Living epistles" are the true modern miracles, and these are "known and read of all men" (2 Cor. iii. 2). We need these credentials, and, with these, we can dispense with all others. "To one who has this personal experience of God in Christ," says Professor Stearns, "this inward miracle of grace, the miracles (*i.e.* of Scripture) are not strange or incredible. They are accredited by the knowledge the Christian has of the power which gave rise to them and which has wrought such a change in himself. That the

¹ *Werke*, Walch's Edition, Band vi. s. 295.

God of redemption should have seen fit, for the purpose of introducing the Christian redemption into the world, to use these outward miraculous means is wholly reasonable. The only question is whether we are to expect miracles at the present time ; and this question is answered in the negative, not through any doubt of God's ability, which is abundantly attested by the regenerative and sanctifying exercise of power to-day, but on the ground that the redemptive revelation is once for all in the world, and that the outward evidences of divine power which once were necessary are no longer requisite—a consideration which passes from presumption into proof when we examine the alleged miracles of our own day and find in them nothing that can be explained as the result of God's providence. The Christian who has thought out the data of his own spiritual life has no trouble about miracles. It is only the rationalistic Christian, who will not make use of the facts within, who finds himself offended by the miraculous element in the Scriptures and is on the alert to explain it away, as far as it is possible to do so. It is the firm possession and the scientific use of the experience within that makes the miracles credible.”¹ We may conclude this chapter by a quotation from a still more recent Transatlantic writer :—“The New Testament,” says Dr W. N. Clarke, “represents that in the first age the Holy Spirit imparted to Christians certain powers which for some reason did not continue beyond that age. It is held by many that the cessation of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit was due to spiritual decline in the Church, and that they would return if faith were revived, and become the general and permanent endowment of the Christian people. To many the idea of miraculous endowments is attractive, and they think

¹ Cf. *The Evidence of Christian Experience*, *ut supra*, p. 333.

the Church would be spiritually richer for possessing them. But the best progress leads away from them toward a life so full of high spiritual quality and power that miracles are not felt to be needed. Paul himself, standing in the midst of these gifts, regarded them as temporary, and as distinctly inferior to the abiding graces of faith, hope, and love (1 Cor. xii. xiii.). We are safe in judging that he was right. Gifts in the realm of character far excel all powers that appeal to the senses. The 'greater works' that Christ's friends may perform (John xiv. 12) are spiritual."¹

¹ *An Outline of Christian Theology, ut supra*, p. 425.

CHAPTER XIX

PROTESTANTISM AND CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

§ 1. *Transubstantiation debases Worship and stimulates Idolatry*

WE have seen in last chapter the evil influence of Transubstantiation in the direction of the miraculous. It makes "imaginary miracles" the very centre of the worship of the Church. We have now to notice its tendency to stimulate idolatry. When a poor visionary at the altar and the devotees at a distance have got the length of "adoring the consecrated host," they are, consciously or unconsciously, in the snares of idolatry. It is idolatry in its most insidious form. It is now maintained that the very lowest idolaters make a distinction between the fetish, which appeals to their senses, and the object of worship, which appeals to their spirit, and of which the fetish is only a reminder. This is exactly the position of the Roman devotee. He will persuade us that he does not worship the wafer, but the Saviour whose body and blood he professes to discern in it. The wafer is a fetish, and he professes to get past the fetish to the body and blood of the adorable Redeemer. So that we have in Transubstantiation all the stimulus which is required to secure idolatry. Of course the worship of images was established in the Church of Rome long before the dogma of Transubstantiation was formulated; but what we would point out here is that idolatry was stimulated and ultimately confirmed by the

development of eucharistic doctrine into its final form of Transubstantiation.

We need not here go into the details of image-worship, how it had no existence until the fourth century, and had little security in the Church until the sixth century. It was condemned in advance at the Council of Elvira in 305, and again in the Council of Constantinople in 754. But the second Council of Nice anathematised the iconoclasts, and Pope Adrian subsequently endorsed its decisions, and thus image-worship received the approval of the holy see.¹ The point we wish to make, however, is simply this, that the eucharistic adoration tends to stimulate idolatry. The association of worship with the sacramental elements, even when the greatest precaution is taken to guard the worshipper against the worship of the material thing, is most dangerous. There is always the liability to degenerate into idolatry pure and simple.

We believe that the same tendency will be found in the "eucharistic adoration" recommended by the advocates of the "Real Presence." Thus when Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury says in his Charge, "Adoration is not due to the consecrated bread and wine, although 'Christ our Lord (as Bishop Andrewes says) in or without the Sacrament is to be adored,'" he is really putting a strain upon every worshipper, who will find it requires an effort to resist a superstitious adoration.² Besides, the very same warning will be found in the writings of the Romanists. They profess to be quite as alive as any of the sacerdotalists to the danger of worshipping the matter which appeals to sense, instead of the body and blood of Christ which appeal, they say, to faith and to spirit. Thus Gardiner, in his controversy

¹ Cf. Cox's *Protestantism and Romanism Contrasted*, *ut supra*, vol. ii. p. 82, etc.

Charge, *ut supra*, p. 62.

with Cranmer, says, "That is not adored that the bodily eye seeth, but that which faith knoweth to be there invisibly present"; and Harding, in his controversy with Jewel, says, "Neither do we adore the outward shape and forms of bread and wine, for they be but creatures, but the body and blood of Christ under those forms verily and really contained."¹ The question, therefore, becomes a purely practical one, which can be answered by experience. Have eucharistic adorers kept the spiritual and the material distinct in thought or confounded them? The Roman doctors confess that there has been confusion in the case of image-worship, their fine-drawn distinction between direct and transitive worship not being regarded. But in the eucharistic adoration the difficulty is greater. For the whole theory of the Real Presence is built upon the notion of a substance being present without accidents, a present body which yet can neither be seen nor felt, which may be in ten thousand places at once and still be one, which may occupy no place, and may be taken from place to place without motion. It will be next to impossible to separate the adoration of Christ's body from that of the consecrated elements to which it is 'brought,' 'joined,' 'united,' and with which it is 'identified.' And yet it is acknowledged that the adoration of the elements would be idolatry.² No wonder that Calvin speaks about "the abominable idolatry, when bread is presumed to assume divinity, and raised aloft as God, and worshipped by all present! The thing," he continues, "is so atrocious and insulting that without being seen it can scarcely be believed; but it stands so exposed to the eyes of all that there is very little need of argument. A little bit of bread, I say, is displayed, adored, and invoked. In short, it is believed to be God, a thing

¹ Cf. Archdeacon Martin's *Lord's Supper*, *ut supra*, p. 181.

² Cf. Martin, *ut supra*, p. 206.

which even the Gentiles never believed of any of their statues ! And let no one here object that it is not the bread that is adored, but Christ, who becomes substituted for the bread the moment it has been legitimately consecrated.”¹

§. 2. *Transubstantiation has been reduced to an absurdity through the development of the new ‘Devotion to the Sacred Heart’*

It will be well here to devote a section to the new form of devotion which arose at the close of the seventeenth century through the raptures of a nun, Margaret Mary Alacoque, but which only received papal sanction under Pius IX., who canonised the enthusiast. There can be no doubt that the idea underlying Transubstantiation is the prolongation of our Lord’s expiation, as if the sacrifice of Calvary were insufficient. When, moreover, the idea could be entertained, as by Thomas Aquinas, that a dog might, by accidentally getting hold of a consecrated wafer, partake of *Christ*, and that He is liable to be torn by the teeth of wicked men as well as unconscious brutes, we can easily understand that the notion would get abroad that Christ could still suffer in His sacramental body. Indeed Origen, in his commentary on Leviticus, had in the third century suggested that our Saviour still suffered through our sins. “He mourns over our sins,” he says, “and suffers still the bitterness of our sins.” The passage in which these words occur was transferred to the Benedictine breviary, and the teaching it contains became thereby the common property of the whole Church. The prolongation of His atoning agony seemed to be a pathetic appeal to the hard hearts of men. This is what Transubstantiation is

¹Tracts, vol. iii. pp. 383.

imagined in some measure to accomplish. It is supposed to bring the body of Christ down into the sphere of suffering and expiation once again. But Margaret Mary Alacoque thought the suffering Christ could be made still more vivid and realistic by concentrating attention on His suffering and bleeding heart, and devoting to a part of His body what should be offered indeed not to His material body at all, but to the Divinity which is in His humanity enshrined. And so in her visions she imagined that Jesus had bared His heart to her; nay, that He had given His heart to her, while she, of course, surrendered hers to Him. The upshot of the interview was that Jesus is represented as saying to her, "You have taken hitherto only the name of my slave, I give you from this time that of the beloved disciple of My Sacred Heart."¹ The pathos of a suffering Saviour was supposed to be in this way intensified. Pictures of the most gruesome and grotesque description were multiplied. It was thought that as a new worship it would be tolerated in England, when Transubstantiation was made illegal through the test-acts. The Jesuits adopted it, pressed it in spite of every opposition upon the attention of the Church, until at length they persuaded Pius IX. to canonise the authoress and to endorse the new worship. Committed as the Church now is to this ghastly devotion, she presents a *still* suffering Saviour to the children of men, and makes life a *via dolorosa* from start to finish! Canon Jenkins in his very interesting work on the subject points out the dangers as well as heresies it contains. On these we need not dwell. It is sufficient for our present purpose to point out the painful, gruesome character which is hereby imparted to Christian worship. The Church of Rome, instead of rejoicing in a risen and glorified Redeemer, insists on bringing

¹ Cf. Canon Jenkin's *Devotion of the Sacred Heart*, London, p. 42.

Him down again into the sphere of suffering and sorrow, subjects Him to indignities which are quite unnecessary, and casts a sickly light over the whole domain of devotion.

§ 3. *The worship of Saints and of Images confirmed and materialised by the Church of Rome*

It will be easily seen that such a degradation of worship as we have been pointing out can only confirm the old heresies of saint and image worship. The invocation of saints is an effort to realise the "communion of saints" in a very selfish and unbelieving way. In the first place, the Church of Rome seems never sure of living saints, but canonises dead ones who have been sufficiently long dead to have escaped Purgatory and reached Paradise. But instead of contemplating the departed ones in the glory, Romanists are encouraged to pursue them with pitiful appeals, to cry to them as if the Saviour were too busy or too overwhelmed to afford them the help they as suppliants need. Without any assurance that the saints can hear their prayers, without any scriptural encouragement to multiply mediators in such a way, they are directed to invoke the saints and make the Church triumphant the home, if possible, of the anxieties and troubles of the Church militant.

Then relics as well as images are to be worshipped, so that the Christian Church is changed into a charnel-house or a museum where the relics of the dead and their images may communicate some help to living and struggling men. The inconsistency of all this worship with the second commandment hardly needs to be pointed out. But it will be well to emphasize the fact that the whole construction of the Romish worship is a worship of fear and of gloom. Christ as a glorified and all-sufficient Mediator is not thought of as He deserves to be; while the dead Christs of imagination, the mutilated Christs of the order of the

Sacred Heart, with all the sensationalism borrowed from the dead, conspire to make the whole sacred year sad like dark Gethsemane, a worship of apprehension and slavish fear. We can easily see from the New Testament that God meant something better than this for sorrow-laden men.

§ 4. *Protestantism makes preaching the leading part in Christian worship*

The Mediæval Church had thrust the sacraments into the foreground and relegated preaching to the friars. It is said the Pope himself would be violating the custom of hundreds of years if he ever thought of preaching. He reserves himself for imaginary benedictions and sacramental grace. Sacerdotalism was triumphant for centuries before the Reformation. It seems so much easier and handier to save men through the waters of baptism and transubstantiated elements than to appeal to their understandings and hearts through the written and preached Word. Yet Protestantism set itself deliberately to multiply the preachers. The Reformers, as we have already observed, were to a man great preachers. The assemblies were gathered, consequently, to hear the Word preached, and to celebrate the sacraments. Now when the Holy Scriptures become the text-book, and their saving facts and redemptive doctrines are pressed home by men who have felt what they say, the result can only be salutary and uplifting. Human hearts get broken under the hammer of truth, and then they are healed through the consolations of the gospel. The Reformation was the re-establishment of preaching as the chief means of grace for the Church. "The prevailing tendency in the cultus of the first three centuries," says Professor Allen, "was homiletical or intellectual, appealing to the conscience and the reason; while the disposition which asserts the essential

importance of the physical symbols and which found its supreme expression in the Eucharist was held in abeyance. In the ancient Church, it was the boast of the Apologists that there was neither temple nor sacrifice nor altar, but a spiritual worship consisting in the offering of a grateful heart to a purely spiritual being, of whom no image could be framed. . . . In the age of the Reformation it (the dogma of Transubstantiation) was condemned and rejected as false to the reason and to the Word of God, in all the Protestant Churches. The revolution then accomplished in the cultus was deeper and more extensive than any changes in organization. The accretions of religious symbolism from the fifth century, together with the philosophy which inspired them, had lost their meaning and their attraction. The worship of the saints and their invocation was forbidden; images and relics were cast forth from the sanctuaries; the cultus of the Virgin Mother, the stimulus to the most enthusiastic devotion of the Middle Ages, was abandoned; the sacramental principle was restated in a spiritual form which nullified the tendency to regard physical acts as in themselves possessing spiritual validity. The Church of the first three centuries, neglected and almost forgotten in the long régime of the sacramental and sacerdotal theologies, then became the court of final appeal and a higher standard for worship, when as yet there was no priesthood or altar or sacrifice, in the sense those words had carried in the Latin Church. The homiletic service regained its ascendancy and the Eucharist was restored to its early simplicity.”¹

§ 5. *Protestantism through a Religion of joyful Assurance responded to a Saviour addressing men from the Glory*

We have already seen how the Church of Rome opposes the doctrine of Assurance, lest men should feel themselves

¹ Cf. Allen's *Christian Institutions*, *ut supra*, pp. 440, 441.

independent of her ministrations. Her policy has been to keep men in her power. Her worship of gruesome fear, her perpetually-suffering Christ, her charnel-house relics, her assertion that it is presumption to be sure of salvation, have conspired to keep souls in bondage. But when the Reformers came to look into such questions as those of life and death, of Christology, and of human freedom, they soon discerned a glorified Christ as the centre of the gospel system. They rose on wings of faith into the heavenly places to sit down with Christ and survey all things from His sacred side. They concluded that He *had* made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness. They regarded assurance of salvation through Christ as the only position a believer *ought* to take up. Their assurance of faith was the response on earth to Christ in the glory. "If religion," says Sprecher, "be the great problem of the world, the fundamental problem of religion in a sinful world is salvation from sin—*personal assurance* of the sinner's acceptance with the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ. Have we not evidence that when this is made the centre of all theological thought, the motive of all preaching and Christian activity, Christianity becomes almost irresistible to those who believe in the truths of the so-called natural religion? Was not this the case in the days of Luther, when positive religion had become a mere form, and men were just in that mental state when they would rapidly have followed the naturalism which had then begun to prevail, if the preaching of the Cross in the emphatic manner of the principle of the Reformation had not turned *religious beliefs toward the necessity of personal assurance of salvation* through faith in Christ alone? Is not this the reason why infidelity is always so little checked by Romanism? Was it not this characteristic of the preaching of Wesley and Whitfield which made the natural

religion of the day cease to plead its independence, and became a preparation for the reception of Christianity instead of naturalism? . . . This appropriation, this Christianisation of these rational beliefs, is practicable; but it can be made so only by making justification by faith the central and determining principle in our theology; not by receiving it merely intellectually, but by making it a matter of which we can speak as did Paul—"I know whom I have believed"—a matter of inner conscious experience, and insisting upon it as such."¹

§ 6. *Protestantism consecrates time as well as space by its doctrine of the priesthood of all believers*

It has been pointed out that the Church of Rome has tried to put her religious stamp upon both time and space, and thus to conquer for Christ both the visible and invisible worlds. The appropriation of time is made by the arrangements of the Christian year. The appropriation of space by making the material elements of the world tributary to the Church.² But it is found in practice that the appropriation of the Christian year is vitiated by the artificial separation of the sacred from the secular, and made to hinder rather than to help the best interests of men. Roman Catholic countries are being handicapped in the race of progress by reason of so many "holy days," which turn out to be so many excuses for idleness and business interruption. Why should the Church demand so many holy days, when as a matter of fact they turn out to be days of idleness and of dissipation? The Church would appropriate time much more thoroughly if she preached up hard work, self-reliance, and the consecration of all business and all pleasure unto God.

¹ Cf. Sprecher's *Groundwork*, *ut supra*, pp. 444, 445,

² Cf. Allen's *Christian Institutions*, *ut supra*, p. 466, etc.

Now this is what Protestantism is committed to. If all believers are priests, all legitimate business ought to be consecrated to God. Every day will be holy in this sense. Communion with God will be maintained in the walks of business, as well as in sanctuaries on sacred days. Time is only properly appropriated when every moment is dedicated to God, as business and innocent enjoyment just as well as religious services may be. Protestantism makes a believer's whole time sacred! The Christian year has been captured as a whole, not in part only by a few holy days!

But this need not prevent Protestants uniting at the Christian festivals. Nothing but narrow-mindedness will prevent an enlightened Protestant from keeping Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, and Whitsuntide with his fellow Christians throughout the world, and so have the foundation facts of the Christian faith emphasized. It is to be feared that in some of the Protestant denominations there is such a revolt from the notion of a Church parcelling out the year, as to lead to the neglect of some facts and doctrines which are brought prominently before us in the arrangements of the Christian year. The great preachers of the Reformation and later times have allowed the Christian year to suggest their themes, and have given to their people and to the world a completer theology than would have otherwise been likely. The Churches might lay kind hands upon the Christian year without handicapping business in presence of world-wide competition or ministering to superstition.

Again, Protestantism can consecrate space better than Rome does by her doctrine of sacramental efficacy and all the dangerous tendency of her sacerdotalism. Protestantism comes forward to sustain the experimental method and to find in nature the mind and will of God.

The believing scientific investigator is in the Protestant idea what the great poet proposed to be, "Nature's priest."¹ And all things in Nature and in Art are consecrated to God, because belonging to Him. And so we need not strain the symbolism of Nature, to make sacraments, as Rome does, where there is no need of them. We can see how all material things may subserve God's glory and promote His kingdom. And so Protestantism applies to consecration what Tennyson applies to prayer, and says in faith,

"For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God." ²

¹ Cf. Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*.

² Cf. *The Passing of Arthur*.

CHAPTER XX

PROTESTANTISM AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE

§ 1. *Discipline, a Note of a True Church*

FROM Christian Worship, which we have very briefly considered in last chapter, we now proceed to Church Discipline. All the Churches are agreed that the exercise of discipline is a "note" of the true Church. And indeed the Reformation of the sixteenth century had primary reference to Church discipline. It was a cry for Reform in the Church and by the Church; and when the Mediæval Church only mocked the Reformers and demonstrated that she had no intention of honestly setting about self-reformation, Protestantism stood forth as the determined resolve of honest men to secure Church discipline for themselves. The Decrees and Canons of the Council of Trent are the great vindication of Protestantism, as a necessity for Europe and the world, if the discipline of the Church was to be preserved. We need not dwell on the absolute need of discipline. If a Church allows discipline to become a dead letter, she will herself degenerate into corruption and death. The question we have to answer is the practical one—how can Church discipline be best exercised? And here it will be necessary to look in a broad and comprehensive spirit at the exercise of discipline by the various Churches.

§ 2. *Discipline, how exercised by the Church of Rome*

Now, if we set aside the "apostolical succession" theory, as unwarranted by Scripture and by the experience of the

Church, we have the episcopate and the inferior orders of clergy as existing primarily for disciplinary purposes in the Church of Rome. The whole elaborate organisation is for government; and, if it fails in the governmental department, then it is bound to be condemned as insufficient for its purpose. Now, what we are bound to notice in the sixteenth century is the existence of the Romish hierarchy, exercising their functions, and among these the confessional, and yet the result was an unreformed Church. But we shall not run rashly to the conclusion that episcopacy and the confessional as organs of Church discipline are an utter failure because they failed notoriously in the Church of Rome; yet we are bound, we think in all fairness, to note their failure in this instance at the time of the Reformation. Luther and his fellow-Reformers were driven to the conclusion that the Church of Rome, with its spiritual rulers and their confessional boxes, could not maintain discipline in the Church, and that in the interests of morals a new start must be made!

But we must consider whether the Church of Rome has not recovered her power of discipline, more especially in presence of a militant and conscientious Protestantism. Now, we have taken some trouble to get at the real facts of the case, so far as the present discipline of the Church of Rome is concerned. We have before us an essay published in 1834 by the Rev. David O'Croly, then "parish priest of Ovens and Aglis," upon the subject of "Ecclesiastical Finance as regards the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland," and in it we get an admirable insight into the methods of Rome. Mr O'Croly's aim in the publication was to secure, if possible, an endowment of the Roman Catholic Church to save the priests from the degrading mercenary methods to which their purely voluntary support doomed them. He was also of opinion that the endowment would be a wise

political measure. We must add that his injudicious publication, as it was regarded by his ecclesiastical superiors, led to his being cited before his Bishop and ultimately deprived of his benefice. But this result makes the revelation of the Church's methods all the more credible. A quotation or two from this interesting work will place the methods of the Romish Church clearly before us. "The mode of exacting clerical dues," he says, "is quite arbitrary and capricious; fixedness and uniformity are out of the question. Almost everything depends upon the temper and disposition of the clergyman. . . . Every priest, looking to his peculiar necessities or to self-interest, makes the most he can of his ministry, and multiplies his exactions without any reference to statute law or episcopal authority. Owing to this departure from fixed rules the strangest discrepancy prevails even in the same diocese as to the Church demands made upon the people. . . . The revenue of the parish priest is derived from a variety of sources. There are Confession dues, Marriage dues, Mass dues, and dues for Anointing. He is also paid at times for attendance at Funerals. Confession furnishes the most steady and constant source of revenue. Twice a year he collects confession money under the denomination of Christmas and Easter offerings. The mode of making this collection is not very consonant to the spirit of religion. The priest selects one or two houses in every plough-land or neighbourhood, where he holds, according to appointment, what are called 'stations of confession,' and it is required that the families all about should meet him when he comes among them upon these occasions; should make their confessions, receive the Holy Sacrament, and finally pay the customary dues. It sometimes happens that this business is not transacted quietly. If increased dues are demanded—a thing of occasional occurrence—disagreeable and sometimes scandalous altercations ensue.

Similar scenes occur when individuals attend and crave time for payment; while such as absent themselves, unless they send the dues as an apology, are generally made the subject of public abuse and exposure. All these things take place in connection with the celebration of mass and the administration of two sacraments—Penance and the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper. The association must be admitted to be rather an unholy one. If no money was to be paid on such occasions, all things would go on well and the whole scene would be religious and edifying. But the intermixture of money transactions and money altercations changes the entire scene, and proves at once a fatal counteraction to all the previous works of devotion. Most certainly the good of religion requires an alteration in this matter. But supposing all things go off quietly and without a murmur, is it right that the payment of money should be coupled with the administration of religious rites? The custom on the face of it bears an unholy complexion. It transforms religious rites into merchantable commodities, which the priest prices and turns to his own advantage in the best manner he can. He gives and gets *quid pro quo*. This is the appearance of the thing; and the common people do imagine that they pay their money in lieu of getting confession and communion. So deeply indeed is this persuasion engraven on their minds, that they consider themselves exempt from the obligation of payment unless they actually get absolution and the holy sacrament—that is, value for their money.”¹ We refrain from quoting Mr O’Croly’s account of the unseemly wrangles at marriages about money, and the other details he gives about money for extreme unction and masses for the dead, whereby Church revenue has degenerated into “a mere scramble.” We can, however, appreciate the argument of a self-respecting priest that some public

¹ Pp. 27-32.

endowment would be better every way than such a mercenary scramble. With such a side of the subject, however, we have here and now nothing whatever to do. We simply affirm that with such arrangements regarding confession and the Eucharist there can be no wholesome discipline in the Church. Purity of communion is not what is aimed at, but the money product of the parishes. As long as fees are taken at the confessional and for the holy communion, there can be no discipline worth the name in the Church!

§ 3. *Protestantism embraces within its borders various methods of Church discipline*

And here it will be necessary to give a very simple outline of the chief branches of Protestantism, so far as it bears upon the question before us.

Let us start with Episcopacy. Now in this branch of the Reformed Church a hierarchy is retained for the purpose of rule, and, according to the High Church views, for the purpose of "the apostolical succession." The latter we have set down as imaginary, for which there is no proof either in Scripture or in experience. The purpose of the episcopate, therefore, which is left is simply that of rule. The bishops stand for the discipline of the Church. The question which is being asked inside as well as outside the Church is this, Are bishops proving the organs and safeguards of the Church's discipline or the reverse? It seems to us that episcopacy is upon its trial before the English people, and if it cannot do something to rescue the Church from Romeward tendencies and conspiracies, the common-sense English mind will ask, What is the use of the system? The judgment of the people will ultimately be guided by the experimental method.¹

There is one method of exercising discipline, moreover,

¹ Cf. Walsh's *Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, *passim*.

which we trust the bishops will not foster but condemn—we mean “auricular confession.” We have referred to it in a previous chapter, but it will be needful to notice it again. Such a High Churchman as the late Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury advocated the discipline in his charge, quoting from Dean Donne and others in its support. Rejecting the idea that the “power of the keys” implies the power of absolving sin in the confessional box in God’s stead, as the sacerdotalists maintain, we have simply to consider the ethical and social aspects of the confessional as a method of Church discipline. And it has been shown that auricular confession weakens the conscience and will instead of strengthening them; that it tends to perpetuate itself as a necessity of the penitent instead of helping him at some time to stand alone; that it conflicts with the sacredness of family life and is alien to public spirit in politics.¹ Mr Thornely’s conclusion is a sound one: “Advice and sympathy can be given elsewhere than in a confessional box, and they will lose none of their value from coming spontaneously and as the need for them may be felt, instead of being dealt out at stated intervals in the forms and phrases which authority has prescribed. . . . The easy relations which subsist at present between a clergyman and his parishioners are the source of much of the former’s power for good, and they will be entirely done away with if the clergyman should be metamorphosed into the parish ‘priest’ and confessor.”² Of one thing we may be quite certain, that an unsocial institution like the confessional, which had its opportunity in the Mediæval Church to secure discipline and promote purity and failed notoriously to do so, is not likely to serve

¹ See the whole question very temperately discussed in the Burney prize essay of Mr Thomas Thornely, B.A., LL.M., on *The Ethical and Social Aspect of Habitual Confession to a Priest*, London, 1880.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 115.

the discipline of the Church to-day. There is something better for Protestantism than recourse to this discredited method of the Church of Rome.

Secondly, we have to look at those branches of Protestantism which proposed to resuscitate the discipline of the Church without the aid of bishops. Lutheranism, as we know, substituted lawyers for the Mediæval bishops in the consistories, and so provided boards of Church government, which savour more of state authority than of the pure authority of the Church. It was in Switzerland that the Reformed Faith received its most thorough renewal, more especially under the hand of Calvin. The system he established, however, has been in many points misunderstood. It is sometimes represented as a "republic," as if the Reformer copied into the Church the institutions he saw around him in Geneva. But one, who in all his writings never takes an illustration from the beautiful, natural world by which he was surrounded, is not likely to have copied like a schoolboy the republican institutions of Geneva into his ecclesiastical system. The Church in his regard is a monarchy, but the King is Christ. With His rights as absolute Sovereign, he would allow no one to interfere. But instead of the Sovereign needing to supplement His mind and will as expressed in Holy Scripture by shady revelations to monks and nuns, He can make the Canonical Scriptures the law of His Church and refer His officers for guidance always to these. As for these officers, why should they not be, thought Calvin, on the apostolic model, no special priesthood, but "elders" and "overseers" (ἐπίσκοποι) as in the Jewish synagogues, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." "In calling those who preside over churches," says Calvin, "by the appellations of 'bishop,' 'elders,' and 'pastors,' without any distinction, I have followed

the usage of the Scripture, which applies all these terms to express the same meaning. For to all who discharge the ministry of the word, it gives the title of 'bishops.' So when Paul enjoins Titus to 'ordain elders in every city,' he immediately adds, 'For a bishop must be blameless.' So in another epistle he salutes more bishops than one in one Church. And in the Acts he is declared to have sent for the elders of the Church at Ephesus, whom in his address to them he calls 'bishops.' Here it must be observed that we have enumerated only those offices which consist in the ministry of the word; nor does Paul mention any other in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians which we have quoted. But in the Epistle to the Romans, and the First Epistle to the Corinthians, he enumerates others, as 'powers,' 'gifts of healing,' 'interpretation of tongues,' 'governments,' 'care of the poor.' Those functions which were merely temporary, I omit, as foreign to our present subject. But there are two which perpetually remain—'government' and 'the care of the poor.' 'Governors' I apprehend to have been persons of advanced years, selected from the people, to unite with the bishops in giving admonitions and exercising discipline. For no other interpretation can be given of that injunction, 'He that ruleth, let him do it with diligence.' For from the beginning, every Church has had its senate or council, composed of pious, grave and holy men, who were invested with that jurisdiction in the correction of vices, of which we shall soon treat. Now that this was not the regulation of a single age, experience itself demonstrates. This office of government is necessary, therefore, in every age (Titus i. 5-7; Phil. i. 1; Acts xx. 17-28; ἐπισκοπους; 1 Cor. xii. 28; Rom. xii. 8). The care of the poor was committed to the 'deacons.'"¹ Here, then, was Calvin's simple system, a

¹ Cf. *Institutes*, book iv. chap. iii. § 8.

monarchy where the "crown rights" of Christ shall be continually preserved, and the officers shall be the "Christian ministers" called by the people to their work, with whom "representative elders" are associated for the government of the Church, under whom another set of officers act called "deacons," charged with the temporalities, more especially the care of the poor. Now, has this system served to maintain discipline in the Church? As a matter of fact we have ample illustration of this in the Churches of the Continent, of Scotland, of England, of Ireland, and of America that follow the Presbyterian system. So far as pure Churches are concerned, securing discipline, these have got this all-important "Note."

There are other Churches which have modified the Swiss model in some measure, and yet by a system of self-government they have shown their ability to secure and to enforce the discipline of the Church. We see a laudable desire on the part of these various Protestant communions to keep the Church pure and separate it with more or less distinctness from the world. Into the details of these Church organisations it is not necessary for us to enter. But one thing may be noted regarding them all, that it is through open, confidential pastorates, such as Mr Thornely recognizes so cordially in the Church of England, and not through any confessional espionage that the discipline of the Church is secured. It is not by sitting in judgment on their fellows, it is not by insisting on knowing the secrets of their souls, it is not by pronouncing unwarranted absolutions that the "Communion of Saints" is preserved in some measure of purity. Friendly pastoral intercourse backed up by fraternal fellowship among the members of the same Church will go far to keep Church membership what it ought to be.¹

¹ Cf. Dr Washington Gladden's *Christian Pastor*, *passim*.

§ 4. *The mistake of trying to get beyond a credible profession*

There is one caveat which has to be here entered, and with which we will conclude this present chapter. Churches, anxious to keep their communions pure, are tempted to guard the door of Church membership so closely as to make, if possible, the visible Church no more extensive than the invisible Church. They are anxious to admit none but *real* Christians to the privileges of Church membership. To secure this they adopt measures in some cases of a questionable character, subject their catechumens to a very formidable ordeal, prosecute inquiries like amateur detectives, and leave no stone unturned to reach a just decision in the cases before them. May there not be here something almost as objectionable as a confessional?

Our Lord is surely our Exemplar in this matter as well as in all others. Why did He allow a Judas to have a place in the apostolic band? It was, let us believe, not because He did not discern his worldliness and duplicity from the start, but because the reception of Judas on his credible profession was the only course to take if Jesus was to be a help to us. If He had acted on His supernatural knowledge of Judas, it would not help us who have to be satisfied with natural knowledge. We cannot look into one another's hearts; we cannot be absolutely certain of one another's spiritual state. There is no use in attempting to get beyond the credible profession. Judas, we have little doubt, looked as solemn and as earnest as any of the apostolic band. Christ took him on his credible profession. And He utilised him, though Judas had a devil. He secured in Judas the most valuable witness we possess of the sinlessness of our Saviour. To go beyond the credible profession will only land us in serious difficulties and increase the number of hypocrites.

In a sermon on "The Church-membership of Hypocrites,"

based upon our Lord's selection of Judas to the apostolic office, the following passage appears which may help to indicate the line of duty in this matter of discipline: "All is designed (in providence) to guard this infallible discernment as a divine prerogative, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.' We can only judge according to the appearance, God alone can judge absolutely righteous judgment. The death of believers has been very properly discussed in this connection. We have all wondered why believers are allowed to die. Why do they descend, just as hypocrites do, to the narrow house to find that it is appointed for ALL living? Would it not be better that literally according to our Saviour's words, 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in Him should never die?' And suppose for a moment that believers did not die, but were taken when their career in this world was over, like Enoch or Elijah, home to heaven, then death would be the discoverer of the divine secret about those who are not the Lord's, and, instead of our funerals being scenes of charity and hope, they would be changed into scenes of unutterable despair. . . . But God in His great mercy has arranged otherwise, and death, coming alike to all, is allowed to betray no secrets which God has determined to keep in His own wise hands. Yet Church-membership with some people would be manipulated, were they able to do so, so as to reveal with absolute precision who are believers and who are not. In opposition to all such inquisitors, therefore, God has made a credible profession the rule of Church-membership, along with the Church-membership of the professor's children. God reserves to Himself the knowledge of them that are His, and will not show His hand until the time for judgment."¹

¹ Cf. *Sermons by Irish Presbyterian Ministers*, Belfast, 1888, pp. 194, 195.

CHAPTER XXI

PROTESTANTISM AND GOOD WORKS

§ 1. *The Church of Rome urges Good Works as part of the price of Salvation*

WE have seen in last chapter how Protestantism maintains the discipline of the Church. It is not by the secrecy and espionage of the confessional, but by the open, above-board, and yet confidential relations of the pastor and his fellow-labourers to the members of the flock. We have now to pass to the great test of the two systems—to the perpetual experiment which is being carried on; which system produces the best record in the matter of “good works.” The charge is made against Protestantism of a tendency* to neglect good works and the requirements of God’s law, because individuals have reached assurance of salvation. In more technical terms it is asserted that assurance of faith leads to antinomianism. Nor do we desire to deny that at the time of the Reformation, and since, some enthusiasts have rushed to the conclusion that they might live as they liked, because Christ has paid the entire cost of their salvation. Luther, we know, had to hasten from his retreat at the Wartburg to check at Wittenberg certain antinomian enthusiasts, who were burning their Bibles, committing themselves to the sole guidance of the inner light, and endangering the Protestant movement with which they were associated. He at all events had no sympathy with their careless living; his counsel all along

was that Christian people should be "careful to maintain good works" (Tit. iii. 14). And a fair comparison of the two systems, in this all-important matter of good works, will give the palm to Protestantism.

For we are bound to notice the ground on which the Church of Rome urges good works. It is as contributory to personal salvation. She denies the possibility of assurance; promises salvation only as the reward of a long and laborious probation; promises it not in God's gracious and acceptable "now," but after the soul has passed through penances on earth and purgatorial fires in the world unseen. Good works, she thinks, will be multiplied when represented as part of the price of our salvation. Accordingly we find her urging penances to "disarm the vengeance of God, and prevent the punishments decreed against us." The works to be performed are to be "of their own nature painful and laborious," for they are "a compensation for past sins."¹ A whole world of "artificial" works is thus created by the Church; penances, whether tormenting, like self-inflicted flagellations, or imaginary, as when a certain number of "Paternosters" or "Ave Marias" are prescribed, on the principle that prayer is after all a punishment! No one, we imagine, can in calm moments set these artificial performances down as "good works"; rather must we call them, in Napoleon Roussel's phraseology, "bad good works."

Now it is the "artificiality" of a large proportion of Rome's "good works" which we would here point out. Scripture prescribes no good works as the price even in tiniest measure of salvation. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done," says the Apostle Paul, "but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he

¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Donovan's Translation, pp. 290, 291.

shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit. iii. 5-7). So that this workshop of penance, which the Church of Rome has set up, is artificial and superfluous. No one requires such things as self-inflicted torture or compulsory and pain-giving prayer as the atonement for post-baptismal or any other sin. And yet how large an amount of the "good works" of Romanism is expended in this workshop of penance; souls, who might as enraptured Protestant saints be devoting themselves to good works for necessary uses, are doomed to grind in the prison-house of penance, and to produce a miserable record in the way of work. So much for artificial "good work!"

§ 2. *"Good works," done for personal purposes, can never rise into disinterestedness*

But now, leaving Rome's artificiality aside, let us look at the better works which she encourages her devotees to perform, and which have the air of philanthropy about them. The sick are nursed, the poor are visited and fed, the downtrodden are raised up and supported; but by workers, we must remember, who are *saving themselves* through the charities of the Church. Self-preservation, self-salvation underlies the whole charitable effort of the Church of Rome. And this self-regarding element prevents the entire charity of the Church from ever reaching *disinterestedness*! In perfect accordance with this self-regarding spirit we find the charity of Rome carried on by her liveried servants, monks, nuns, priests, all doing their work in livery, getting credit for their work on earth, whatever may be thought of its moral value in heaven! Now, we are not pointing this out in any "Puritanical" spirit—far from it. There is a very valid reason why

“hospital nurses” and “slum sisters” should go about their gracious ministries in certain recognised garbs, which the rudest casual is learning to respect! We are simply pointing out the fact that a self-righteous Church, which flatters men and women with the idea of meriting in some measure their salvation, encourages her agents to go about in certain recognised liveries, and so to get all the credit from the world which she thinks self-denial deserves. Morally her devotees can never reach the plane of disinterestedness. The working out of one’s own salvation vitiates the whole of her charity—she can never on her doctrine reach the sunlit heights of disinterested charity which saintly souls have trod and are treading at this hour!

§ 3. *“Good works” done through slavish fear can never rank with the works of real love*

Romanism is a religion of fear. The cringing fear of the slave characterises all her devotees. Denying them assurance of salvation on earth, torturing them with apprehension of purgatorial fires after death, she coops herself up deliberately within moralities of fear; her good works are done under compulsion; she believes in taskmasters; she encourages men to flagellate themselves, if she is too busy to flagellate them herself. Now good works extracted in this way from devotees can never reach any high moral level. As a matter of fact there is a heavy-laden spirit in all the charities of Rome. All her liveried officials, male and female, go to their missions of mercy with a lugubrious air about them, as if “the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world” were, in their case at least, never lightened, but life was meant to be one never-ending tragedy. How can it be otherwise when the Church never allows her devotees to escape from the slavery of absolute submission to her decrees, and makes all charity a task for

which a master waits? The high-born philanthropy of Christ and His apostles, which led them to dedicate themselves in life and death to the public weal, can never be reached by the devotees of Rome, who are doomed to tread their *via dolorosa* of penances and purgatories in uncertain hope of sighting some day, far off in the coming years, the celestial city. In the race of philanthropic enterprise the Church of Rome deliberately handicaps her representatives, and no wonder they are being distanced daily in the supreme contest!

§ 4. *Protestantism rightly bases "good works" upon gratitude for a salvation which is all of grace*

In the Sermon on the Mount in which our Saviour lifts His disciples into the light of the Fatherhood of God, He puts to His adopted brethren the pointed question, "If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. v. 47). The point to which we invite attention here is that our Lord implies that His brethren, enjoying the adoptive love of God, ought to do more than other people. This is the test to which the Protestants of the world are content to submit. If we do not more than others we *ought* to do more; for our privileges in the way of doctrine and discipline should secure the best works going. Let us realise as clearly and concisely as we can the Protestant position. It is that God has come in His gospel with the offer of salvation as a free gift to be had at once. "Now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Just as Jesus assured the penitent robber on the Cross that that very day he would be with Him in Paradise, so we are invited to a Paradise of pardon and acceptance without delay. Salvation, we are assured, has been secured for us through the self-sacrifice of the Saviour, and we are asked to receive it as a free gift, without money and without

price, and without delay. "By grace," says the Apostle Paul, "are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9). Suppose this royal offer is accepted by us, and we, discarding all self-righteousness, take God at His word, and enter Paradise in penitence and joy; what will the effect be upon us? "We will love Him who first loved us." We will be grateful for this great salvation. Gratitude undying in its character will assert itself within us. We will at once begin "to live not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 15). We will begin to ask, as Paul did on the way to Damascus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and "good works" will prove the necessary result of so great salvation (Acts ix. 6). Accordingly we find the apostle, after the statement about salvation already quoted, proceeding to say, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10). "Good works" are thus shown to be the effect, not the cause, of salvation; the fruit, not the root, of salvation; the outcome, not the price, of our redemption. They are, so to speak, the divine "interest" produced by the great divine "investment." Just as a great machine is constructed to turn out "good works" in the shape of certain articles of art; so a saved soul is God's created machinery to turn out a long series, here or in the world to come, of "good works." The motive power is gratitude. We feel that we would be doing injustice to the God of our salvation were we not to produce the series of good works which He has designed. And if the good works are thus seen to be simple acts of justice to God, there can be no *merit* in them. We cry with psalmist and poet, "My goodness extendeth not to Thee; but to the

saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight" (Ps. xvi. 2, 3);

"For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee."¹

§ 5. *Protestantism is leading Christendom in the matter of Philanthropy*

Protestantism, as we shall see later on, fosters enterprise and secures worldly, as well as spiritual, success. It enjoys as godliness a "promise for the life that now is as well as for that which is to come" (1 Tim. iv. 8). Protestant nations are wealthier than Roman Catholic nations. Indeed, Cardinal Newman tries to account for this on the principle that his adopted Church is so occupied with the invisible, as to neglect the visible and to despise outward success.² That this is not the proper account we shall easily demonstrate in due course. But what we wish here to point out is the notorious fact that Protestants are in the van of the world's philanthropy. Romanism gets infinitely more from Protestantism than she gives. In fact the outcry is to give nothing to the heretics, but to take all from them that Romanists can. Roman Catholic poor are fed with Protestant bread. The demand is for larger help every year. The poverty which Rome fosters is pleaded as the reason for Protestant philanthropy. "Catholic education" is extracted from Protestant nations indirectly if not directly on the same plea of poverty. Protestantism can well afford to be generous, because Protestantism is rich. And the very impositions to which Protestantism is subjected by the Church of Rome, who is not ashamed to play the pauper at the door of Protestantism, proves our case that Protestantism leads Christendom in the matter of philanthropy. Dwelling

¹ Cf. Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, The Dedication.

² Cf. Newman's *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties*, new edition, Dublin, 1857, pp. 190, 191.

in the light of God's love manifested in Christ Jesus, fearing no evil, emancipated from the fear of man because so filled with filial fear of God, Protestantism may well be philanthropic.

“The free-born Christian has no chains to prove,
Or, if a chain, the golden one of love ;
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
What fear he feels, his gratitude inspires.”

Now it was this philanthropy that Luther inculcated so nobly in his pearl of an essay on “The Freedom of the Christian Man.” “True then,” he says, “are these two sayings: Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works. Bad works do not make a bad man, but a bad man does bad works. Thus it is always necessary that a substance or person should be good before any good works can be done, and that good works should follow and proceed from a good person. As Christ says, ‘A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit’ (Matt. vii. 18). Now it is clear that the fruit does not bear the tree, nor does the tree grow on the fruit, but, on the contrary, the trees bear the fruit and the fruit grows on the trees. As these trees must exist before their fruit, and as the fruit does not make the tree either good or bad, but, on the contrary, a tree of either kind produces fruit of the same kind ; so must first the person of the man be good or bad before he can do either a good or a bad work ; and his works do not make him bad or good, but he himself makes his works either bad or good. . . . Here is the truly Christian life ; here is faith really working by love ; when a man applies himself with joy and love to the works of that freest servitude, in which he serves others voluntarily and for nought, himself abundantly satisfied in the fulness and riches of his own faith.”¹

¹ Cf. *Primary Works*, *ut supra*, pp. 121-125.

§ 6. *Protestantism receives with surprise the gracious reward which is assigned to "good works"*

There is nothing which Protestantism finds more difficult to set satisfactorily before the people than the reward which Jesus assures us await all good workers in the better life. Even a cup of cold water given in His name will not lose its reward (Matt. xxv. 31-40). Indeed He represents these faithful souls as receiving the reward with surprise. "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" Evidently they will reach His judgment-bar under the impression that they *deserve* no reward. This is the spirit of Protestantism. Good works are not meritorious. We say, after the most earnest effort, "We are unprofitable servants; we have [only] done that which was our duty to do" (Luke xvii. 10).

The conviction that good works are not meritorious is deepened when we consider "how much we owe" to God's grace. As an old writer has well put it: "'To whom much is given, of them much shall be required.' The blessings we enjoy are not the fruit of our merit, but the fruit of God's mercy. By how much the more grace we have received, by so much the more glory we are obliged to return to the giver. He does not exact much where little is bestowed, nor accept little where much is received. A drop of praise is an unsuitable acknowledgment for an ocean of mercy. . . . Where there is distinguishing mercy there ought to be distinguishing duty. The husbandman who holds the largest farms will pay the greatest rent, and he who sows the most precious seed will expect the choicest crop."¹ We cease

¹ Cf. Secker's *The Non-Such Professor in His Meridian Splendour*, pp. 24-27.

from all self-satisfaction, we entertain no thought of merit, when we meditate faithfully upon all we have received from God and what a trifling return we have made for it all.

Moreover the element of magnanimity comes in to help us here. There will be found underlying Rome's doctrines of "venial sin" and of meritorious works a radical little-mindedness. There is a meanness in the overestimate, a childish minimising of faults and overestimate of services. There is nothing of the magnanimity which attaches to the true Protestant doctrine. Emerson, in his suggestive essay on "Gifts," says: "You cannot give anything to a magnanimous person. After you have served him, he at once puts you in debt by his magnanimity. The service a man renders his friend is trivial and selfish, compared with the service he knows his friend stood in readiness to yield him, alike before he had begun to serve his friend and now also. . . . Besides, our action on each other, good as well as evil, is so incidental and at random that we can seldom hear acknowledgments of any person who would thank us for a benefit, without some shame and humiliation. . . . Rectitude scatters favours on every side without knowing it, and receives with wonder the thanks of all people." This will help us to appreciate the magnanimity which characterises God, and the magnanimity which begins to characterise His believing people. In the freedom of experience we learn to serve Him with the love of joyful hearts, and to do our best for all men for His sake. But we feel that it is a very inadequate return for all His love as shown us in Christ Jesus. The debt remains always with us, a debt which we can never discharge. It will be to us a genuine surprise to find that in His further magnanimity He has provided a gracious reward for every loving work, and resolved to make us still more His debtors through His everlasting grace.

CHAPTER XXII

PROTESTANTISM AND THE OTHER WORLD

§ 1. *The Confessional a mockery in that it gives no assurance of faith*

WE pass now from the "good works" of Romanism and of Protestantism to consider the views entertained by the two systems regarding the other life. To appreciate the Church of Rome's views, however, it will be needful to consider the uncertainty in which, notwithstanding the confessional, she leaves her devotees. Though insisting on bringing them to the confessional box, it is only to give a partial and conditional absolution. If any sins remain unconfessed, they remain unforgiven. And if any informality should exist about the confessor's orders, or if any defect should mar his intention, the absolution would be vitiated and the confessional relief prove a mere mockery. Besides, Rome's deliberate doctrine is that she cannot as a Church be certain of the saving faith of her devotees, and neither can they themselves; so that there never was a greater fraud invented than the confessional! It can impart nothing but uncertainty to those resorting to it; it is designed to keep them in fear to the very end of life's chapter. Now what we have next to notice is that *Purgatory* is the Church's clumsy device to relegate decision and certainty about salvation to another world, instead of settling the all-important matter here. That is to say, the Church sets up her judgment-seat by means of the confessional; but her judgments are not final, nor certain; they are poor

attempts to relieve souls of some of their burdens, while nothing approaching assurance of salvation must be permitted. Then when the last confession has been made in this world, the Church, only groping in the dark about sin and salvation, hands over its professing Christians to purgatory to be there purified by fire and fitted for Paradise. For purgatory, we must remember, is *not* for sinners who have been *impenitent* to the close of life. These unfortunates go to the abodes of despair at once. Purgatory is the intermediate state where penitents have their purification perfected, and this purification is by fire.

That this is the correct Roman doctrine can be easily proved. The Council of Trent makes the following declaration on the subject:—"The Œcumenical Synod, in accordance with the Catholic Church (which is taught by the Holy Spirit), with the Scriptures, and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, teaches that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are aided by the suffrages of the faithful, and most especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar."¹ In the sixth session of the council we are informed that "the souls therein are those of truly penitent and justified sinners." The Council of Florence, moreover, teaches that "the souls of true penitents, dying in the love of God, before they have brought forth fruits worthy of repentance of their sins, are purified after death by the pains of purgatory; and they are delivered from those pains by the suffrages of the faithful that are alive; such as holy sacrifices, prayers, alms, and other works of piety, which the faithful do for the other faithful, according to the orders of the Church. And the souls of those who have never sinned since baptism, or of those who, having fallen into sin, have been purified from them in their bodies, or after their departure out

¹ Cf. Sess. xxv. Decretum de Purgatorio.

of them . . . enter immediately into heaven, and purely behold the Trinity—some more perfectly than others, according to the difference of their merits. Lastly, the souls of those who die in actual mortal sin, or in original sin only, descend immediately to hell—there to be punished with torments; but not equally.”¹ The catechism of the Council of Trent, moreover, speaks of “the fire of purgatory, in which the souls of just men are cleansed by a temporary punishment, in order to be admitted into their eternal country, ‘into which nothing defiled entereth.’”² Now the proof of this terrible doctrine is found, we are told, in 2 Macc. xii. 43-46; xv. 38-39. To these apocryphal proofs we need not particularly refer. Then such a passage as Matt. xii. 32, about the sin against the Holy Ghost not being forgiven in the next world, is supposed to warrant the inference that other sins may there be forgiven; while 1 Cor. iii. 11-15, is supposed to give support to the notion of purification by fire. The classical passage, however, is 1 Pet. iii. 18-20, but, as the Rhemish version gives the passage, “Those spirits that were in prison, which had been some time incredulous,” it would be unfair to quote it in favour of a purgatory for believing souls.

§ 2. *Purgatory, the extension of judgment into the other life and the postponement of assurance of salvation*

It will now be plain that purgatory is a pure imagination of the Church to get rid of the decision about salvation, which she ought to reach in this world, and relegate it to the authorities in the world to come. How the Church can reach assurance about the deliverance of souls from purgatory, seeing that she can reach no such assurance of salvation in her confessionals here, must be an enigma

¹ Concil. Florent. Labbe., vol. xviii. pp. 20, 26, 533.

² Cf. Donovan's Translation, *ut supra*, p. 59.

to everybody. How does her imagined information come? Who communicates the fact of the masses and intercessions having proved effectual in delivering the poor souls from purgatorial fire? It is plain that in a world where no traveller, but Christ Himself, has returned from the bourne beyond, all the assurances which massing-priests give those who pay them about the escape of their departed friends from purgatorial fires, are the purest imaginations, and of a piece with the whole fraudulent creation. Purgatory has no existence outside the imagination of devotees. It has no warrant in Scripture; it has no warrant in antiquity. It was not generally received until the twelfth century, and was not formulated until the Council of Florence in 1438. It is a belated hallucination to supplement the practical failure of the confessional to give assurance of salvation to the devotees of the Church.¹

Moreover, the notion that material fire can purify the soul is in strict keeping with the notion that baptismal water can regenerate the soul and a transubstantiated wafer can convey in physical fashion Christ's body and blood to the recipients. The whole theory of purifying and saving souls in this outside mechanical fashion proves, when put to the test, to be the merest moonshine, a creation of men's imagination, the work of visionaries and nothing more!

Doubtless the securing of purgatory even in imagination has been a profitable business. The property has been a most valuable one for the Church. But it is bound sooner or later to go the way of all those fraudulent investments which are palmed off upon a too credulous public; and those who issued the prospectus should be amenable to public justice! Purgatory has been a fraud from the beginning, a mere working upon men's fears.

¹ Cf. Cox's *Protestantism and Romanism Contrasted*, *ut supra*, vol. ii. pp. 315-339.

It has indeed been suggested that this post-mortem discipline of the Church has brought out the solidarity of mankind, leading them to arrange and pay for masses for the dead, and so maintaining their unity with the living. But to represent the whole abominable trade in indulgences, which led to the blessed revolt at the Reformation, as an illustration of the solidarity of mankind, is too favourable a construction of it.¹ Our present representation is more strictly true. The whole purgatorial creation has simply been to postpone the problem of decision and of certainty, which the confessional could not furnish, to another life; and to ask the authorities in charge of the furnaces to complete the purification which was supposed to be begun by baptismal water and consecrated hosts!

§ 3. *Protestantism discounted the doctrine of Purgatory as entirely hostile to the assurance of salvation fostered by the Gospel*

Luther was led in his Theses to strike out against it in its relation to indulgences; but he came to still clearer views against it at a later date. Accordingly we find him in a "Discourse of Purgatory" represented in the *Table Talk* as saying: "As for purgatory, no place in Scripture maketh mention thereof, neither must we any way allow thereof; for it darkeneth and undervalueth the grace, the benefits, and the merits of our blessed sweet Saviour Christ Jesus. The bounds of purgatory extend not beyond this world; for here in this life the upright, good, and godly Christians are well and soundly scoured and purged."² Romanism has, as Sprecher admirably observes, "completely obscured the primitive personal assurance of salvation. She said: 'You must be saved through the mediation of the Church.' Whether she spoke of grace or of works, the

¹ Cf. Allen's *Christian Institutions*, p. 417, etc.

² Cf. *Tischreden*, ut supra, s. 1522-3.

conclusion was always the same. If she spoke through those of her organs who were of Augustinian tendency, she said: 'You must, indeed, be saved by grace, but this grace, this saving grace, is in my hands. God at Pentecost poured out this grace upon me and committed it to my keeping and dispensation. He has endowed me with all the powers of salvation, forgiveness of sin and regenerating grace, to be wielded by me in behalf of men on earth and in purgatory, until He come again to hold the final judgment. I exercise them and dispense their blessings at my will and discretion. You can be saved, therefore, only if you are in a state of obedience to my dictations; and as you are entirely dependent upon my offices, and that until the end of your life, yea, even in purgatory, you can never in this life be *personally* assured of your salvation.' If she spoke through those of her ministers who were of Pelagian proclivities, she said: 'Works are, indeed, necessary and meritorious, and you must be saved in part by human works and human merits. But the human works and merits which make the soul acceptable to God, are not the works and merits of humanity as such, of humanity external to me, but of the humanity that is included in me, of humanity in a state of obedience to me, and represented by me. They are my works and merits as the mystical body of Christ—in which each member is dependent on the merits of the whole body. You can be justified only as you share in the merits of the saints on earth and the saints in heaven. And the treasury of these merits is mine, to be dispensed at my discretion; consequently, you can never be *personally* sure that you are *justified*, never *personally* sure of your *individual* acceptance with God, of your *individual* salvation.'"¹ It will thus be seen that the Reformers could not but relegate purgatory as a chimera and a dream to the category of old wives'

¹ Cf. Sprecher's *Groundwork*, *ut supra*, pp. 81, 82.

fables, seeing that it prevented souls from reaching that present assurance of salvation which they knew was possible for every man, because they had experienced it themselves.

§ 4. *Protestantism recognises Christ as Mediator and King in the other world*

The views of Protestants differ in many things regarding what is to come. Some expect a Pre-millennial Advent of Christ and a personal reign of Christ and His saints somewhere in this world. They imagine the seat of government will be transferred from the right hand of God in Heaven to some suitable terrestrial centre. Others believe that the Second Advent will be after the Millennium, at the end of the age, to settle all things finally and lay the kingdom in its completeness at the Father's feet. Some believe that Christ is perpetually coming in spirit, judging men, transferring them from this world to that which is to come, arranging for their death, and after death their judgment. Others believe that Christ is coming at the long last to raise the dead and have His great assize, and vindicate before the assembled universe the divine procedure. But amid the various hopes cherished by Protestants regarding the future, whether in this world or in the next, one thing unites us all, and it is this, that Christ is the only Mediator, and He is the rightful King in the Unseen World. All these minor mediators, whom the Church of Rome has gathered round men in the vain hope of thereby comforting them, whether saints, the Virgin, or angels, are allowed by Protestantism to disperse as unauthorised and distracting in the presence of Him who is the only Mediator and the King of kings. Protestantism recognises Christ as He revealed Himself to John the Revelator, when He said, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of death and of Hades" (Rev. i. 18, R.V.) There can be no conflict of

wills consequently, for Christ is supreme in the world to come. Angels, spirits of the just made perfect, and all created things are responsive to the will of Him whose right it is to reign. Even the wrath of men and devils will be so restrained and controlled as to demonstrate the supremacy of Christ. Now this view of the unchallenged mediation and kingship of Christ, about which all Protestants are united, gives an air of homeliness to the world to come. Heaven is simply to "be for ever with the Lord." Heaven is to serve Christ ceaselessly like priests in a great temple, whose every posture and every word are consecrated. If, as we have seen, the sovereignty of God is the unifying principle in Protestantism, we recognise it in the mediatorial sovereignty of Jesus. It is the authority which we have learned to acknowledge here on earth which is to prevail in the world to come.

§ 5. *Protestantism recognises in the place assigned by Christ to each in the other world the environment which exactly suits him*

Now one thing we lament in the present life is the trouble which wicked men inflict upon their betters. Incurrigibly in love with sin, they seem to furnish the Lord's people with opportunities for discipline and patience. Their environment is not certainly what they deserve. But we are encouraged by Scripture to believe that in the world to come men will be placed in an environment exactly suited to their state. The wicked will no longer be at large, but grouped according to class, and so hemmed in as to demonstrate Christ's sovereignty over His enemies as well as over His friends. Judas is said to have gone to his own place; so did the selfish Pharisee who is represented by Jesus as in torment (Acts i. 25, Luke xvi. 25). On no principle of justice could either of these be made comfortable beyond death. And as for the duration of punishment,

Protestantism is now taking wiser views about it. Once "everlasting punishment" was thought to be justly earned by a brief career of sin. And great pains were taken to show that every sin has some infinite element within it, demanding an eternity of punishment, even if it stood alone! But we are now taking the wiser view as Protestants that the duration of punishment will depend upon the duration of sin. That is to say, if sin insists on prolonging its career, if it proves in any case eternal, then punishment must keep pace with it, and be eternal too! And so we find in Mark iii. 29 the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost set down as never to be forgiven, because the blasphemer has been "guilty of an eternal sin" (R.V.). Here is the possibility set before us of eternal sin which should be followed by eternal punishment.

Of course it does seem a reflection upon the power of the Saviour that any person can permanently resist His grace; and could some plan of universal salvation be devised it would make all thinkers happier in presence of the mysteries of being. On the other hand, must not this possibility of permanent antipathy be faced in a government of free beings? and may there not be surprising resource exhibited by the Saviour in dealing with incorrigible souls, by which all the interests of good government shall indeed be secured? Protestantism can leave the mystery of "eternal sin" at the Master's feet!

But of one thing we are quite certain, that neither death nor fire beyond it can be a means of regeneration to any soul. As death finds a soul, so it leaves him. The king of terrors has never turned "evangelist." Nor is there in purgatorial or other fire any "converting ordinance." In our Lord's parable about the rich and selfish Pharisee, He shows that "Moses and the Prophets" will do for men what no visitor from the sheeted dead could do (Luke xvi.

31); and in the other life and in all worlds we may be sure only truth can accomplish the salvation of the soul.

§ 6. *Protestantism recognises in the large proportion of the human race which passes in infancy and early youth into the other world great opportunities of education*¹

We have seen reason for rejecting the Mediæval superstition of purgatory as quite incredible amid our advancing experience of truth and righteousness. There are other antiquated views about the other world which we are beginning as Protestants to lay aside. Was not the idea of heaven entertained for ages something like the life of the Lotus-eater, as if souls were landed on a shore where "it seemed always afternoon," the saints' everlasting rest! No wonder that an agnostic like Mr Harrison should ridicule a "sofa-religion" like this, and ask if the "eternity of the Tabor" is to be the grand finale of the gospel of Christ. We are now waking up as Protestants to see that true rest must be in service which is ceaseless, because it can be unwearied. And so we are diligently considering what outlets for Christian activity may be anticipated in the world to come. A recent writer on theology hazards the calculation that one-third of our race die without having lived long enough to become decidedly good or evil. "If we insist upon high definitions of good and evil," he says, "the proportion will be much larger. They are undeveloped souls, without distinct moral life or record, who, if they continue to exist,

¹ In a posthumous work of the late Professor Candlish, called *The Christian Salvation*, the conjecture is made, under the head of "Eschatology," that a new universe with a new race of beings will be provided after the last judgment, and that the activities of the heavenly world will consist in the education of these new-born kinsmen by the redeemed from among men. This is quite possible; but what is pointed out in the text is a post-mortem field of activity among the human beings who have left this world without education, and who may be supposed to attain education in Christ's celestial school not in the twinkling of an eye, but gradually, as the best education is acquired here.

must be placed in the other world as beginners, without developed personal character. Concerning these, the Scriptures give us no definite teaching; but the spirit of the Christian faith leads us to believe that they are immortal, and that they enter the other world in the care of the Heavenly Father, who accepts them as beginners in life and watches over them for good. The well-remembered words of Christ, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' do not affirm the salvation of infants; but it is difficult to see how he could have uttered them if he had not regarded the little children as welcome to the divine heart when they leave this world. By no means can we conceive it to be otherwise. If those who die in infancy are immortal, it is plain that the undeveloped state in which they enter the other life cannot be permanent. Infants must come to maturity, character must be attained, and life must have its moral significance; but all this must come to pass in the other world." Here then does this fresh writer find opportunities for those who are farther advanced to exercise their activities in the heavenly places. "If," he says, "to so large a part of those who are with Christ, life is necessarily educational, opportunities of usefulness and help must open in inexhaustible abundance to those who are farther advanced in holy experience, and the heavenly life must be intensely active and interesting."¹ The poet, moreover, had anticipated the theologian. Longfellow, in his poem "Resignation," had years before written:—

"She is not dead—the child of our affection—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ Himself doth rule.

¹ Cf. Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology*, *ut supra*, pp. 468, 469.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
 By guardian angels led,
 Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
 She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
 In those bright realms of air ;
 Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
 Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
 The bond which nature gives,
 Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
 May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;
 For when with raptures wild
 In our embraces we again enfold her,
 She will not be a child ;

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
 Clothed with celestial grace ;
 And beautiful with all the soul's expansion,
 Shall we behold her face."

Heaven, in fact, in this view turns out to be a great educational establishment, with infant and other classes in full swing, primary, intermediate, and university teaching proceeding, let us dare to believe, under better conditions than here ; no proctors needed to enforce discipline, but all animated with love and loyalty to God and to each other ! It seems to us that earthly education may be, nay, must be only a crude effort after ideals which are realised there, not here ! If this be a fair estimate of the other life, and its opportunities of service, we can afford to smile at the old ideas about the everlasting idleness which in haste was labelled everlasting rest !

CHAPTER XXIII

PROTESTANTISM AND THE FAMILY

§ 1. *The Flight of the Nuns, and the Marriage of Luther*

It was in the year 1523, six years after the Ninety-five Theses of Luther had been nailed to the church door at Wittenberg, that nine nuns, weary of their rash vows, and convinced that the Christian life could be lived as usefully in society, sought to escape from the Nimptschen Convent, in the dominions of the hostile Duke George. They had written to their families, but, yielding to the ideas of the time, their families had declined to take them back. Their flight was, consequently, arranged for by Luther. As it had a most important influence on the Reformation and Protestantism, we may take the description of the incident and its meaning from Dr Robertson:—"When Leonard Koppi, Burgher of Torgau, knighted for the nonce by royal Luther,—this honest chivalrous Sir Leonard was as brave a knight as ever stormed a giant's castle for the rescue of distressed damsels,—this Sir Leonard drove his waggon filled with nine herring barrels right through the dominions of Duke George; and there in the moonlight, all the nine, the sacred nine, the pretty Eva von Schönfeldt and Kate and all the rest of them, went out from Kate's window by a ladder down to the court, 'softly, softly' they went over the court—where Kate in her haste, like another Cinderella, loses her slipper—'softly, softly' over the wall, and dropped into the brawny arms of Sir Leonard! One,—two,—

three,—all the nine are over, and are stowed away in the herring barrels, and Sir Leonard drives off again, straight back through the dominions of Duke George. ‘*Abend, Koppi!* what hast thou there in that waggon?’ ‘Herring barrels, Herr Huntsman.’ ‘Barrels of herrings you mean?’ ‘*Ja, Ja.*’ *That* was a narrow escape, for that was a huntsman of Duke George. And so in safety they are brought to Torgau, and in safety to Wittenberg. But Luther is sorely puzzled what to do with the poor girls; their parents disown them, and will have nothing to do with the runaway nuns. Shut out from the sanctuary of their girlhood and home, they naturally think—(poor nuns, the human heart, the trusting, loving, hoping, yearning human heart, has not been crushed out of them yet, and dreams of bridegrooms and of marriage bells did hunt them wickedly, even in the cloister, poor daughters of Jephthah!)—now when the gates of sweet and happy life have suddenly re-opened—they naturally think of the higher sanctuary of marriage, and so the pretty Eva does get married presently to a young physician at the Prince’s Court, and by and by, though not without some swine-herds in the way, for Luther certainly would have preferred the beautiful and careless Eva had he thought of it in time; and there is one Baumengarten to whom Katherine it would seem had plighted vows, and to whom Luther now writes to come without delay and take his Kate or he would lose her altogether,—as the things go, the marriage bells are ringing in the Castle Church, the bridal pair is blessed by Dr Bugenhagen, the Elector sends in venison, the Wittenbergers silver goblets of beer and wine, and to the belfried monastery where Cranach, Melancthon, and the other wedding guests are assembled, Luther brings home his bride.” The marriage took place on the 13th June 1525, more than two years after the flight of the nuns. It was

no case, therefore, of marry in haste and repent at leisure. To return to Dr Robertson:—

“That Protestants should find fault with Luther for this marriage seems to me something strange. No doubt it was a breach of his monastic vows, and from the Roman Catholic point of view it behoved him rather to have acted like St Dunstan, who, when the beautiful lady poked her nose betwixt the bars of his cell, seized it with the tongs, so that she roared and bellowed like a fury, which showed what the fair tempter really was—no lady at all, but Satan. But, seriously, it seems to me the very thing, above all others, that Luther should have done was to marry a runaway nun, and that not only on such grounds as these; that it is not good for man to be alone; that marriage is a sacred ordinance; that he was now on the wrong side of forty and quite able to choose for himself, and that Caleb shunning matrimony because of its inconvenience is (as Luther himself says) like ‘one who runs into a river to escape a shower of rain’—not only on such general grounds as these is Luther’s marriage to be vindicated, but also on the very special ground that it was needed to bear witness that his teaching on the subject was sincere; that human life has not been consecrated in two halves, but consecrated as a whole; and that the wisest, best, and holiest way to heaven is not the one half through the monastery and the other through the nunnery, or asunder, but that of both together, and both ‘in the Lord.’ This Luther taught, and to show his teaching was sincere he married the runaway nun; and I am sure that through restoring life to its proper condition, not in the convent, but in the house and in the home, Luther by his marriage struck one of the hardest blows at papacy; and the ringing of his marriage bells and the soft kiss of his Katherine inaugurated a new and better era for the

social life of Christendom, and was as dreadful thunder as the Pope had heard yet." ¹

§ 2. *Luther had deliberately discounted monastic vows as unscriptural and hostile to a healthy family life*

In his work *On the Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, published in 1520, he says: "There is no example of it in the Scriptures, especially of the vow of perpetual chastity, obedience, and poverty. Now a vow of which we have no example in the Scriptures is a perilous one, which ought to be urged upon no man, much less be established as a common and public mode of life; even if every individual must be allowed to venture upon it at his own peril, if he will. There are some works which are wrought by the Spirit in but few, and these ought by no means to be brought forward as an example, or as a manner of life. I greatly fear, however, that these systems of living under vows in the religious are of the number of those things of which the apostle foretold; 'Speaking lies in hypocrisy; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving' (1 Tim. iv. 2, 3). Let no one cite against me the example of St Bernard, St Francis, St Dominic, and such like authors or supporters of religious orders. God is terrible and wonderful in His dealings with the children of men. He could preserve Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael holy, even as ministers of the kingdom of Babylon, that is, in the very midst of wickedness; He may also have sanctified the men of whom I have spoken in their perilous mode of life, and have guided them by the special working of His Spirit; while yet He would not have made this an example for

¹ Dr W. B. Robertson's *Martin Luther, ut supra*, pp. 66-71. A spirited account of the Nuns' Flight and of Luther's wife has been given in Hoffmann's *Katharina von Bora, eine historische Erzählung*, Basel, 1884.

other men. It is certain that not one of these men was saved by his vows or his religious order, but by faith alone, by which all men are saved, but to which these showy servitudes of vows are especially hostile.”¹ There was, therefore, no unseemly haste about Luther’s action; he tried to have Katherine settled by marriage to others; but, being a woman of spirit and of good family withal, although she had no dowry to entice the Reformer with, she declared she would marry either Armsdorf or Luther himself. He was thus led to a very unworldly union with a most worthy woman, whose fine management brightened the Reformer’s last twenty-one years. Thus it came about that the old Augustinian Convent at Wittenberg, from which the monks had one by one departed under the influence of the new teaching, became by the favour of the Elector the home of Luther after his manly marriage, and the emblem of what Protestantism has done for the world. It has supplanted the artificial life of monasteries and nunneries by the healthier life of the family and all that gathers round the sweet name of Home!

§ 3. *Protestantism has exalted the Christian Family as the divinely-intended unit of the Church*

George Brimley, in his review of Patmore’s poem, *The Angel in the House*, refers to the fact that the poets are strangely silent upon the subject of virtuous married life. “They expend their raptures,” he says, “upon the period of courtship rather than of marriage. . . . Wedded love has been almost uniformly rejected as offering no available material for high poetry”; and yet he is of opinion that where, as in the family, “the capacity for generous devotion, for manly courage, for steadfast faith and love exists, there exists the main element of romance.” And

¹ Cf. *Primary Works*, ut supra, pp. 200, 201.

so after a careful analysis of the subject, he is driven to the conclusion that it is "the stupidity of the poets" which has failed to see in family life the romance, the variety, and the dramatic elements needful for the noblest poetry. We might almost make the same complaint against the preachers. We hardly wonder at it in the case of the Roman Catholic preachers. Through their artificial life of celibacy, they are excluded from the experience, open happily to Protestant pastors, of the rich blessings of family life. When they do discuss it, as when Lacordaire, for example, devotes one single conference to the "family," and any number of other discourses to other subjects, it is to treat it in a very artificial and gingerly fashion.¹ It is from Protestantism that we may expect any suitable deliverance upon the subject. One in particular may here be mentioned, the best series of discourses the author ever produced, *La Famille Chretienne*, par E. de Pressense. In this striking volume, which, strange to say, has never been translated, the author calls attention to the fact that "the New Testament has entered into many more details about the family than about the constitution of the Church." The reason of this is obvious, for if there were more attention bestowed upon family organisation and home life, there would be not only less controversy about ecclesiastical polity, but the experience within the Church of permanent revival. It is the home that mirrors the Church. It is in the home that we should receive our training for Church membership and Church activity. Hence Church officers, instead of being celibates, are to be selected, if possible, from among "family men," the husbands of one wife, ruling well their households, and so showing their ability to rule in the larger household,

¹ Cf. *Conférences de Notre-Dame de Paris*, Tome ii., Paris, 1861. "Trente-quatrième Conférence," p. 120, etc.

the household of faith, the Church of God (1 Tim. iii. 2-5, 12). The Christian home is to afford the private rehearsal, so to speak, of the public Church-work. Pressense accordingly, starting with the principle that there is as much difference between a Christian family and a worldly family as there is between a disciple of Christ and a man of the world, goes on to show in the relation of Jesus Christ to the Church the ideal of marriage, and then traces out with a strong hand what Christian education in a Christian family should be, and how masters and servants, as well as parents and children, should live together in the exercise of a beautiful Christian spirit. This eminent Protestant divine, therefore, who has also written well on social questions, gives to us in his charming monograph a great contribution to the wisdom and importance of the family as an institution. God hath "set the solitary in families"—it is man's poor device to set them in monasteries and convents.

In contrast with this Protestant treatment of the family, let us now notice the attitude of the Church of Rome to it. This great organisation is managed by men who, under their unscriptural vow of perpetual celibacy, are entire strangers to family life. Is it wonderful in such circumstances that a Church, delivered over to the tender mercies of a set of "old bachelors," should be becoming narrower and more intolerable in her policy every year? Living in an artificial society where the family is not the unit, under all the hallucinations and selfishness which belong to that unnatural state, is it wonderful that the authorities can devise nothing better than an iron despotism with a cowardly *espionage* carried out by means of the confessional, and which threatens the liberty of the family as well as of the individual? What was the Vatican Council of 1870, which in the face of history with its

adverse verdict insisted on formulating the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope? A witty Italian friend of ours has truthfully described the Council as a meeting of 600 or 700 "old bachelors" to persuade one of their number that he was infallible; and he added that the same number of married men would never have met together for such a purpose! Such an outrage on common sense as well as on the facts of history would never have been perpetrated by men that either knew themselves or the world they live in.

But now how do these "old bachelors" placed in authority in the Church of Rome treat the family institution? A writer in commenting on the passage already referred to in *Timothy* has said that "the judgment of God plainly is that wherever there is a body of clergy who have no families to govern, there is a body eminently incapacitated for guiding the Church of God." This is strikingly illustrated in the policy of the Church of Rome. Although proclaiming marriage a sacrament, she has by enforcing celibacy on priest and nun proclaimed the morality of the married state to be lower than the morality of "single blessedness," and she has never hesitated to sacrifice to her party purposes the sanctities and confidences of home! There is not a family in her communion which can be faithful without yielding up to the confessor or director, as the case may be, every family confidence and secret. Animated by never-ending, unslumbering suspicion of her devotees, she insists on coming between husband and wife, between parent and child, and, like the old serpent, she invades the paradise of home. As the most perfect despotism ever devised against the liberties of the race, the Church of Rome insists on knowing all secrets, dotes upon her acquired omniscience, turns her clergy into detectives and conspirators against the most sacred rights of love, so that it is not her fault if she has not succeeded in destroying the sanctities and quenching

the sacred fires of home!¹ The Reformers were right, therefore, in disregarding their rash and unscriptural monastic vows, and in basing the Protestant movement upon the family institution as the divinely-intended unit in the Church.

§ 4. *The Decadence of the Church of Rome can be traced unmistakably to her monastic and religious orders*

A writer already quoted has said: "One of the most suggestive thoughts that can arise in the unprejudiced mind in regard to the changes and innovations which have altered the face of Christianity from age to age is this: that almost everyone of these proofs of the decadence of the religion of Christ has sprung out of the monastic system, and is to be traced to the influence, not of individual minds or separate Churches, but to that of the religious orders, and the unnatural confederations and conflicts they have occasioned in the Christian body. Almost every doctrinal controversy in the Western Church of the Middle Ages, and in the Roman Church since the Reformation, has originated in the jealousies and struggles of Benedictines, Augustinians, Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits; and it is to the triumph of the last of these orders that we owe the three greatest innovations of modern times—the Definition of the Immaculate Conception, and of the Papal Infallibility, and though last, not least, the even more perilous because more popular and practical novelty, the 'Devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.' The whole of the doctrines of grace, and the entire moral system of the Roman Church have been moulded by the same irresistible power, which having crushed out all independent thought and action in the members of that Church, has built up out

¹ Cf. Mr Thornely's *Ethical and Social Aspect of Habitual Confession to a Priest*, *ut supra*, p. 81, etc.

of the ruins of ancient Christianity an absolutely new religion, and entered upon a career of innovation of which it must be difficult for the most gifted prophet to divine even the more immediate probable results. . . . Our religion," continues Canon Jenkins, "unlike any that preceded it, was eminently and intensely the religion of the individual, against that fatal system which crushes out individuality under the pretence of a 'holy obedience,' and the religion of daily life and duty, under the specious pretext of a 'higher life,' and supernatural aims. And it is as emphatically the religion of the family, as against that system which would break up the holy ties of kindred and family, to create an artificial and unnatural bond, separating the links which God has joined together, and dishonouring the original bond of marriage, which He instituted as the root and origin of all human society. . . . Upon these two great institutions (property and marriage) Christ founded His new society and Church, building it up not in the cloister or in the wilderness, but in the free and open scene of domestic life, excluding by the clearest implication every principle and every institution which tended to resist or to disturb this great foundation of the social compact. . . . To honour the great law of marriage, He chose married men to be among His chiefest disciples: to prove how entirely He repudiated the very idea of their separation from the world, His last prayer for them was, 'not that they might be taken out of the world, but that they might be kept from the evil,' that, remaining at their post in the world, they might live as not of the world."¹

¹ Cf. Canon Jenkins on *The Devotion of the Sacred Heart*, pp. 80-82.

CHAPTER XXIV

PROTESTANTISM AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS

§ 1. *The Church of Rome and Social Questions*

WE have seen in last chapter the serious and prejudicial attitude taken up by the Church of Rome towards the family. Marriage is cast down to a secondary moral position through the exaltation of celibacy; and the confidences of family life are sacrificed to the Church's confessional. We have now to notice her attitude to society at large. Of course, a Church, which is prepared to manage families in detail, is ready to manage society in the bulk, and to undertake, if the nations will only permit her, to rule over them all! It was said of an English statesman that he was so versatile and so self-confident as to be ready to undertake the management of the army or the management of the navy at a moment's notice. The Church of Rome exhibits similar versatility and similar self-confidence. She imagines she is able to heal the sores of society and to remove the ache from its heart, if it will only trust itself to her.

Now it is important to notice that the Church in dealing with the individual tries to influence him *externally*. She thinks she regenerates him through the waters of baptism; and, later on, communicates Christ in the "consecrated host." She thinks that by her "chrisms" and "imposition of hands" and endless ceremonies she can reach and save the soul. We need not be surprised, then, to find that she proposes to deal with society in the same outside fashion. Society, she imagines, may be manipulated, and so saved! We cannot do better than turn again to the *Conferences* of

Lacordaire, the great Dominican, where we may see how the Roman Church attacks the question of society. In the conference succeeding the one already referred to on the Family, he takes up the wider subject of Society; and the first lesson it receives is that of *authority*, public authority through the hierarchy, secret authority through confession. Society is to take its schooling and direction from the Church. And when we inquire what society has in these days to learn from the Church, the answer is the "dignity of labour" from the monastic orders, the "solidarity" of the race in "suffering and sorrow" which the Church tries with more or less success to relieve, and "the truth" which is doled out to it as "Catholic Education."¹ Now this lesson of industry was surely learned long ago from the monks. The Church need hardly have kept up such a staff of amateur workers to drive home this lesson in our industrial age. The Reformation with its independent spirit and unlimited competition has put the monks devoted to manual labour somewhat out of date! The further question of the education of the people and of their relief and consolation through the officials of the Church is receiving gradually its answer. Meanwhile it is important to notice that this manipulation of society from the outside, this belief on the Church's part that all men can be "managed," is exactly what *Socialism* proposes. Socialism is a proposal to sink individual claims and rights in the ocean of common weal, and to have the reward of work distributed by the State on public grounds and on public principles. Of course, the rights of the family, and the rights of the Church, the larger "household of faith," may not be considered, but go alike to the wall, in the Socialist's manipulation of society. This is, however, as wise men would tell us, "a mere detail"; the grand principle

¹ Cf. Lacordaire's *Conférences*, *ut supra*, tome ii. pp. 142-190.

is that society as a whole has a right to call for such sacrifices from its component parts. But the curious point to which we are thus led is this, that the Church of Rome and the Socialists regard society in the same light, as an aggregation of individuals who are to be manipulated in the interests either of a great Church or of society as a whole. In either case, there is the sacrifice of individual liberty. No wonder that the Church of Rome has failed in dealing with social questions. All she has to give us in these days is mediæval lessons upon labour, and, as far as the age will stand it, mediæval lessons on all other things. Above all, the mediæval notion of authority must be driven home and the supreme duty of submission enforced!

§ 2. *The Church of Rome encourages the organisation of work on sectarian lines*

It may be useful in this connection to notice the interest which the present Pope has taken in social questions. He was credited with this when only a cardinal, and he professes to have continued interested during his pontificate. He was peculiarly gracious to a deputation of French workmen, who had made a pilgrimage to Rome at his jubilee, and who were introduced to him by the general secretary of "L'Oeuvre des Cercles Catholiques d'Ouvriers." This society, on which he bestowed benediction, has been established in France to combat socialism, by placing its members under the safe guidance of the hierarchy. It is an organisation sectarian in spirit, following the clannish feeling in a spirit of obedience, and boycotting those opposed to them. Indeed the weapon which as "boycotting" has in recent years been so dreaded as alien to an age of progress, is borrowed from the inquisition, and has the rust of mediævalism upon it. The world should remember that boycotting has always been the policy of the Romish Church, and she will wield the old weapon

wherever she safely can. She deems it her duty to squeeze out "heretics" from all the positions she can herself monopolise, and has not a wider thought than the interest of "Mother Church." So long as she has such contracted views about mankind and such a faith in her power of manipulating them, she is fore-doomed to failure as a saviour of society.¹ Accordingly we expect and get little help from Roman Catholic writers on social questions. With the exception of De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and *American Institutions*, there are no works of permanent value from the Roman Catholic side; and the latter work is extravagant and uncritical in its praise of democratic institutions.²

§ 3. *Protestantism has contributed largely to the literature as well as to the solution of Social Questions.*

We require to go back a little to appreciate what Protestantism has done for society. The condition of the people before the Reformation was miserable in the extreme. There were revolts of the Serfs in 1476, 1492, 1493, 1502, 1513, and 1514, indicating how grievous their state must have been. When the Reformation came, and Luther spoke so strongly against Pope and Princes in the interests of spiritual liberty, it was only natural that the peasants would be inspired with fresh hope of deliverance from their oppressors. To this they were incited by men of no stability of judgment like Carlstadt and Münzer, with the result that Germany witnessed a Peasants' War, and the Reformers were put to their wits' end to stem the torrent and to bring about peace. A comparison of Melancthon's advice in the emergency with Luther's will

¹ Cf. Kaufmann's *Socialism and Modern Thought*, London, 1895, pp. 131-134.

² Cf. Economic Tracts—*Political Economy and Political Science*, in which is given a classified list of books upon the various branches, running to thirty-six closely printed pages, New York, 1884.

be entirely in favour of Luther. Melanchthon's severity in the circumstances is quite remarkable; he had not the knowledge of peasant life nor the sympathy which belonged to Luther. The down-trodden peasants had drawn up in twelve articles their grievances, and we had better look at these to appreciate the justice of their case:—"1. The right to choose their own pastors, who should preach the gospel purely and plainly without any additions, doctrines, or ordinances of men. 2. Exemption from the small tithe. The tithe of grain they were willing to pay for the support of pastors. 3. Release from serfdom, since they as well as the princes had been redeemed by the blood of Christ. 4. The right to fish and hunt, since when God created man he gave him dominion over all animals, over the fowl of the air, and the fish in the waters. 5. A share in the forests for all domestic uses. 6. A mitigation of feudal services. 7. Payment for labour in addition to what the contract requires. 8. Reduction of rents. 9. Security against illegal punishment, and a desire to be dealt with according to the old written law. 10. The restoration of the meadows and of the corn land which at one time belonged to a community. 11. The abolition of the right of heriot, by which widows and orphans had been shamefully robbed. 12. The resolution to submit all these articles to the test of Scripture, and to retract one, or all of them, if found not to agree with the Word of God."¹ What did Luther do when these reasonable demands were laid before him? He recognised their reasonableness and sat down and penned a noble appeal to the *Princes and Lords*, chiding them for their severity and pleading with them for the people. He next wrote to the *Peasantry* declaring his sympathy with their just demands, but urging them to seek redress in other ways than by rebellion. He

¹ These articles are given in German by Walch, Strobel, and Gieseler, and quoted by Richard in his *Philip Melanchthon, ut supra*, pp. 145, 146.

acted a noble part as mediator amid the storm ; and if neither the princes nor the peasants acted as he advised, but preferred to fight out their quarrel to the bitter end, the Reformer was entirely right in the course he adopted. He may have been extravagant in his denunciation of the rebels when he saw that they would not listen to reason ; but he had as little right to involve the Reformation in a revolution of the peasants as the apostles would have had if they had involved primitive Christianity in a war of the slaves against their masters. Protestantism must trust in the sword of the Spirit as after all a weightier weapon than the sword of steel, and productive of deeper results.

But one thing we need here to notice and it is this : Protestantism has given strength and nerve to the individual in contending for his just rights by every constitutional means, and, when these failed, it has strengthened the oppressed when taking the field against the oppressor. We have referred to the brilliant monograph of Pressense on the Christian Family published by him in 1856. Years before, in 1849, moreover, he published *Conferences upon Christianity in its application to Social Questions*, which are also of great value, and the wonder is that they have never been translated. In these he contrasts the influence of Catholicism and of Protestantism upon Social Questions. He shows that Catholicism, in destroying individual liberty and independence of spirit, can never save society. But Protestantism, he also shows, has been insufficient. It has hitherto abased men before a Sovereign God, so that all feel equal in self-abasement. This is, of course, a great step forward, when peers and peasants and hierarchies are all cast down in the dust before the Almighty Sovereign and constrained to cry for mercy. But more is needed to save society than this. And so he shows that Protestantism requires to bring God nearer to toiling men than

He seems to be when represented as an august and somewhat distant Deity, upon His "awful throne." He needs to be presented as the *Self-sacrificing Brotherman* of the toiling human race. We need to return to the Cross of Jesus Christ, and to touch with it the social wrongs of the world. Society can only be saved by Christ, Divine Love in fraternal form, consecrating and dignifying manual as well as mental toil, and lifting His sorrow-laden brothers into contentment and fellowship with God.¹ Now it is most interesting to notice that writers who have no special interest in religion or theology are yet being driven by the social distress to the same solution. It is admitted by secular economists that the social problem cannot be solved on the principle of unlimited selfishness and unlimited competition. It is admitted that the remedies must be moral. Such a man, for example, as Professor William Graham, whose book on *The Creed of Science* was sufficiently disappointing from the religious standpoint, is led in his more recent volume on *The Social Problem* to admit that it is to the moral teaching of the Founder of Christianity we must look for the solution. He praises the "Christian Socialists," who, like Maurice, recognise a communistic basis in Christianity, and expects that in the near future they shall have their triumph. "The Church," he says, "has missed or ignored the meaning of Christ for centuries; has in consequence taken away the life out of the Gospels, as well as out of the prophets. The Fathers of the Church knew the meaning, and it was a long time before the early Christian Church lost sight of Christ's social teaching. It was, however, gradually lost sight of, in main measure. Strange; because there is no man who brings a sane and unbiassed understanding to the reading

¹ Cf. Pressense's *Conférences sur le Christianisme dans son application aux Questions Sociales*, Paris, 1849, p. 271, etc.

of the Gospels, still less to Isaiah and Jeremiah, without perceiving that what Christ and the prophets equally aimed at was to bring in social justice, or 'righteousness,' as it is rendered. None can doubt, few but know, that the kingdom of heaven with Christ meant at first (and probably to the last) a society with changed social conditions, in which the cruel social inequalities would be redressed; inequalities which mark the latest stages of a nation's history, and which in Judæa, in Christ's time, where men were 'standing idle all day in the marketplace,' because no man had hired them, and where Dives and Lazarus were familiar social types, were as marked as now. No Church nor man can possibly explain away all the many texts in the synoptical Gospels pointing significantly in this one direction; the denunciations of the rich; the advice to the rich young man whose only drawback was his wealth; the terrible parable of the rich man in torment and the poor in heaven; the parable of the rich man, who had 'much goods laid up for many years' of selfish enjoyment, but who was not rich towards God: all turning on the vanity of riches, their demoralising power, and the general injustice of their acquisition. The Christian Church, as M. de Laveleye well says, can never get rid of its socialistic base. The doctrines of communism and of equality are in the Gospels, and they cannot be treated as of no significance without shaking the authority of the other portions, and of Christianity generally, to its foundation."¹ We shall consider presently what Christian socialism really is; but what is of interest is the conclusion which this economist has arrived at, that the Founder of Christianity held the secret of the social question, if we were only allowed to get at it.

¹ Cf. Professor Graham's *Social Problem in its Economical, Moral, and Political Aspects*, London, 1886, pp. 462, 463.

Mr Kidd, again, in his profound work on *Social Evolution*, has shown the absolute necessity of resorting to "those wonderfully moving and impressive altruistic ideals which we have in the simple story of the life and acts of the Founder of Christianity" if society is to be advanced and saved.¹ In social science men are being compelled by the distress of the situation and the difficulty of the problem, to betake themselves to Jesus of Nazareth as "the Saviour of Society" as well as of the individual. And so we can not stop with monastic saints, as if their shortsighted isolation and narrow communism could save society in its present deep distress. We must go past them, one and all, to Him who sanctified manual labour at the carpenter's bench, who hallowed education by speaking His experience to His fellows, and who carried philanthropy up to the heights of self-sacrifice. It is Jesus, and Jesus alone, who can give to us those "altruistic ideals" which will yet transform the world.

§ 4. *Christian Socialism, as expounded by Protestants*

When we mount in the true Protestant spirit to the primitive sources, we find a Christian socialism attempted immediately after the Pentecost. The new converts, in the fervour of their first love, resolved to set up in Jerusalem a commune. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common" (Acts iv. 32). Moreover, they drew out of the 'common fund, not a dividend according to the capital invested, but according to each man's *need*. For a time, in consequence, poverty was put outside the pale of the infant Church. "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that

¹ Cf. *Social Evolution*, edition of 1895, p. 298.

were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet ; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need " (Acts iv. 34, 35). Here was a beautiful ideal realised at once. Private property was voluntarily renounced in the interests of the Christian community, and each one engaged to accept only what satisfied his needs. There was in consequence no lack—poverty ceased within the Church. It could only be found in the world. Communism of the most unworldly type was thus initiated. But it turned out to be before its time. It was not what has been recently called and defined as "Practicable Socialism."¹ It could not be worked because there were selfish Ananiases and Sapphiras in the Church, and because the managing directors, the apostles, had not the time to give to "the service of tables." Persecution, moreover, soon showed the young converts that their dream of a commune in Jerusalem could not be prolonged. But the dream has only been postponed. A day will dawn at the long last when the Christian Church shall become a magnificent Christian commune, and Christians shall be content with the supply of their needs, realising that "a dinner of herbs where love is, is better than a stalled ox and contention therewith."²

Meanwhile, what can Christianity do in the interests of the brethren ? It can affirm that co-operation, rather than competition, is the logic of the Gospel. It can encourage profit-sharing and promote goodwill between labour and capital. It can emphasise the dignity of work and the meanness of able-bodied dependence upon charity. It can preach stewardship and the solidarity of the race. It can promote temperance and make self-indulgence detested.

¹ Cf. *Practicable Socialism*, by the Rev. and Mrs S. A. Barnett, London, 1888, p. 191, etc.

² Cf. Renan's *Les Apôtres*, chap. vii.

It can foster public spirit, and urge men to "live not unto themselves but unto Him who died for them and rose again." Noble contributions are being made to the understanding of Christian socialism in Protestant circles in Germany, in Switzerland, in America, and in England. We append a list of works which lie on our table, and which is only a selection from the literature of this subject.¹ It will be found that Protestant laymen and divines are making the most earnest efforts to understand what Christ meant each of us to do in the interests of the brotherhood. When the world understands Christ better, the dream of the first age will prove the prophecy of the better time which is surely coming on this earth. "At last," says Dr Hitchcock, "when the whole globe comes to be densely peopled, like Belgium and Holland, and every people shall do its utmost to supply its own wants, the daily prayer for daily bread will be an honest and an urgent prayer from the rising to the setting sun. The resignation then preached and practised will not be cowardly submission to social wrong, but submission to Providence, to law, to nature."²

¹ *Grosse Zeiten, grosse Aufgaben*, Vortrag des Herrn Hofprediger Stöcker; *Was thun wir gegen die glaubenslose Socialdemokratie?* von Fr. Naumann, Leipzig, 1889; *Dass Soziale Programm der Evangelischen Kirche*, von Fr. Naumann, 1891; *Was heisst Christlich-Sozial?* von Fr. Naumann, 1894; *Soziale Briefe an reiche Leute*, 1895; *Sozialistische Irrlehren von der Erstehung des Christenthums und ihre Widerlegung*, von Hermann Kohler, 1899; *Secretan's Discours Laiques*, Paris, 1877; *Etudes Sociales*, 1889; *Les Droits de l'Humanite*, 1890; *La Civilisation et La Croyance*, 1887; *Toynbee's Industrial Revolution in England*, London, 1884; *The Socialism of To-day*, by E. de Laveleye, translated by Orpen; *Socialism*, by Roswell D. Hitchcock, D.D., New York, 1879; *Woolsey's Communism and Socialism*, New York, 1879; *Studies in Modern Socialism and Labour Problems*, by J. Edwin Brown, D.D., New York, 1886; *Gilman's Profit Sharing*, London, 1890; *Gladden's Applied Christianity*, 1892; *Tools and the Man*, 1893; *Ruling Ideas of the Present Age*, 1895; *Kaufmann's Socialism*, 1874; *Utopias*, 1879; *Socialism and Communism*, 1883; *Socialism and Modern Thought*, 1895.

² *Socialism*, ut supra, p. 94.

CHAPTER XXV

PROTESTANTISM AND EDUCATION

§ 1. *The Reformers as Educationalists*

WE have seen the important part Protestantism has taken and is taking in the solution of social questions. This leads us of necessity to the question of education. If the world is going to be ruled by the democracy, the ruler had better get an education. This truth, which is being forced into prominence at present, was seen and felt by the Reformers. We have already seen how great a man intellectually Luther was. He was the pride and glory of the University of Erfurt. He became the master spirit at Wittenberg. He and Melanchthon were at one about education. Luther has a right to be regarded as the "father and founder of popular education." In 1524 he "wrote his appeal to the Aldermen of all the German cities in behalf of Christian schools. He declares: 'For the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the home, society needs accomplished and well-trained men and women. Such men are to come from boys, and such women from girls.' He lays great stress on the languages, calling them 'the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed; the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored.'"¹ And this interest in education is of

¹ Cf. *Werke*, Band xxii. s. 168 *et seqq.*; see also Richards' *Philip Melanchthon*, p. 129.

the essence of Protestantism. For Protestantism proposes through the guidance of a book to lead the world back to God in Christ. The Holy Scriptures are the text-book of Protestantism. The world must be taught to appreciate this one Book. Everything which can contribute to the understanding of the Bible must be promoted by an enlightened Protestantism. Hence the education of the people flowed as a necessary consequence from the Protestant relation to Holy Scripture.

Let us notice how, as a matter of fact, the Reformation laid its hand upon education. We have seen that Melanchthon was the rising humanist at the time of the Reformation. He never was an ordained minister, but this did not hinder him becoming the leading theologian of the Lutheran party. He soon became recognised as the great authority on educational subjects. He is named with justice "the Preceptor of Germany." He had a genius for organisation. It was he who carried out the educational programme launched by Luther.

Nuremberg was the first of the German cities to respond to Luther's appeal, and everything was done by that enlightened city to secure Melanchthon as the rector of the schools of the place. But Melanchthon refused to be tempted by the additional comfort the place would have given him; he would remain true to Wittenberg and the Elector. He was invited, however, to visit Nuremberg and help to organise the education of the place. He did so and delivered on the occasion a famous oration in praise of learning. "Without learning," he maintained, "there can be no good men, no love of virtue, no refinement, no proper notions of religion and of the will of God. It is the duty of rulers to foster schools. But there are some who do not know the value of learning, and others are so wicked as to think that

their tyranny would be promoted by the abolition of all laws, religion, and discipline. What shall I say," he continues, "of the bishops who have been appointed by the emperors to superintend learning? The colleges of priests were scholars to whom leisure and endowments were given that they might serve as teachers. Nor did it appear unfortunate that letters should be cultivated by this class of persons. But now we behold none more hostile to the liberal arts than the sacerdotal fraternity."¹ Thus early do we see Protestantism ranging itself on the side of learning, while sacerdotalism of set purpose opposes it. We should add that by his scheme of graduated school education, by his series of text-books, and by his personal influence sought by no less than some fifty of the German cities, Melancthon became not merely, as Döllinger admits, the literary head of the mighty educational movement, but practically the moulder of German education for the past 350 years. His fundamental principle was that all thorough training in theology must rest on a philological and philosophical foundation. He was accustomed to say, "Every good theologian and interpreter of the heavenly doctrine, must be first a linguist, then a dialectician, and finally a witness." Protestantism created new universities and reorganised old ones, so that the present state of higher education as well as of school education in Germany is due to the Protestant spirit. "Protestant Germany," it has been truly said, "is still building on the educational foundations laid by Melancthon more than 350 years ago."

We could easily adduce evidence of the promotion of education by Zwingli, Farel, and Calvin in Switzerland, and by John Knox in Scotland; and could show the

¹ Cf. Richard's *Philip Melancthon*, *ut supra*, p. 133.

influence of Protestantism upon the education and literature of England. Schools and colleges spring up as a matter of course wherever Protestantism prevails.”¹

§ 2. *German Science*

There is one point claiming special notice here in any fair estimate of the relation of Protestantism to education, and this is the rise of the scientific spirit in the German universities. At a definite time, which we can indicate, there was added to the German universities a fourth faculty, called the “philosophical”; the three previous faculties being theology, law, and medicine. What was the “Philosophical Faculty” expected to do? It was charged with the unification of the other faculties by tracing out the root principles which underlie them all. It was charged with the exposition of the inner nature of truth, the exposition of truth for its own sake. And German science means this thorough method applied to all departments. Science in other countries is usually restricted to exact science, as illustrated in mathematics or experimental physics. But Germany maintains we should be “scientific” in every department; that truth is one, and loyalty to truth is the duty of every investigator. Accordingly the rise of the Critical School, as it was called, under Kant, was simply the effort of the open mind of Germany to carry scientific accuracy into every nook and cranny of knowledge. It was at the establishment of the Protestant University of Göttingen in 1734 that the idea of a “Philosophical Faculty” was deliberately inaugurated; and since then, it has spread over the whole German university system.

¹ Dr Fisher’s *The Reformation*, London, 1873, especially his concluding chapter on “The Relation of Protestantism to Culture and Civilization”; also Napoleon Roussel’s *Catholic Nations and Protestant Nations Compared*, 2 vols., London, 1855, *passim*.

Absolute freedom of investigation and absolute freedom of teaching were recognised as indispensable to the highest university education. Mosheim, the theologian of Helmstadt, had, as we might expect, much to do in advising the founder of Göttingen University to this important step.¹ Perhaps a quotation from an interesting work on *German Universities* will make the matter plain. "What is a University?" asks Professor Hart. "To the German mind the collective idea of a university implies a *Zweck*, an object of study, and two *Bedingungen*, or conditions. The object is *Wissenschaft* (Science); the conditions are *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit*. By *Wissenschaft* the Germans mean knowledge in the most exalted sense of that term, namely, the ardent, methodical, independent search of truth in any and all of its forms, but wholly irrespective of utilitarian application. *Lehrfreiheit* means that the one who teaches, the professor or *Privatdocent*, is free to teach what he chooses, as he chooses. *Lernfreiheit*, or the freedom of learning, denotes the emancipation of the student from *Schulzwang*, compulsory drill by recitation."² Now it is this absolute freedom of investigation and of exposition which has made Germany the advance-guard in the army of education. "The German nation," says Mr Merz, "may pride itself on possessing at the present moment the most powerful and best equipped army. But this is only the creation of the present age. With greater pride it may boast of having trained in the course of centuries the largest and most efficient intellectual army ready at any moment to take up and carry to a successful issue great scientific undertakings demanding the intense thought and labour of a few secluded students, or the combined efforts of a large

¹ Cf. Merz's *History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. i. chap. ii. "The Scientific Spirit in Germany." Edinburgh and London, 1896.

² Professor James Morgan Hart's *German Universities, a Narrative of Personal Experience*, New York, 1878, pp. 249-250.

number of ready workers.”¹ It will be seen from this that what a German university aims at is to train *thinkers* who amid absolute freedom can pursue their investigations into truth, encouraged by the thought that truth is catholic and truth is one! Such an aim has of course its risks, but its advantages far exceed its risks; a few freethinkers may be trained, but the vast bulk of the thinkers will recognise the *revelation* in Nature and in History, as well as in the Holy Scriptures, which God has given unto men. Both Mr Merz and Professor Hart touch upon the Protestant element in German university education. “The first Protestant university is Marburg, founded by Philip of Hesse in 1524. Melancthon’s influence is everywhere decisive. Tübingen is reconstituted by Duke Ulrich, 1535; Leipsic by Duke George, 1539; Basel, after three years’ suspension, is reopened, 1532; Frankfort on the Oder is reopened by Joachim of Brandenburg, 1537, who also founds the new University of Königsberg, 1541; Greifswald is reconstituted on a Protestant foundation, 1539; Rostock in 1540-50; Heidelberg by the Elector Frederick II. in 1544; Jena is founded, 1558, by John Frederick; Helmstädt by Julius of Brunswick in 1568; Giessen followed in 1607; Rinteln in 1621; Altdorf in 1622. Of the greatest influence in German culture were the Dutch Protestant universities. Leyden, 1575; Franeker, 1586; Utrecht, 1634; Harderwyk, 1648; they were for a long time the goal of the young scholar’s wanderings.”² And Professor Hart, after giving a table of the forty-four German universities which have come into existence and indicating those of them which have disappeared, goes on to say that since the middle of the eighteenth century, the seat of intellectual activity has been transferred from south to north Germany. “We see

¹ Cf. *History of European Thought*, *ut supra*, pp. 160 161.

² *Ibid.*, n. pp. 159, 160.

following one another in rapid succession the renowned series ; Breslau, Göttingen, Erlangen, Bonn, Berlin. Catholic Germany has been distanced by Protestant." ¹

§ 3. *The contrast in "Catholic Education"*

With a clear view of what is meant by Protestant education, the free investigation of truth for its own sake in the belief that truth is catholic and that truth is one, we are prepared for the contrast which presents itself to this in what is technically called "Catholic Education." We have already seen how the "sacerdotal fraternity," as Melancthon called them, had begun to discourage learning. It is, in fact, no matter of necessity with them, as it is with Protestants. If devotees can be induced to believe that "priests" can dispense saving grace through sacraments, all that is necessary is faith in the priest ! Ignorance becomes in such a case the "mother of devotion" ; learning need not be encouraged, if souls are to be kept obedient. And so there has never been on the part of the Church of Rome any enthusiasm for learning as such. The education of the people is kept in subservience always to their submission to the Church. They dare not be educated, as Protestantism educates men, on the avowed belief that truth is one and should be sought for its own sake. They must be educated to submit to the Church.

Hence it is that while Protestantism translates the Scriptures into the vernacular and circulates them broadcast as containing messages for the multitude, Rome is chary about circulating them, reads them in a dead language, makes a mystery of their interpretation, and keeps in check all free inquiry. Not only so, but while Protestantism has promoted university education in the vernacular, the first university adopting German as the vehicle, instead of Latin,

¹ Hart, *ut supra*, pp. 350, 351.

being Halle in 1694, Rome has as far as possible preserved the mediæval methods, and still makes Latin its medium in the theological schools. Theology is in fact still in its mediæval state in the Latin Church. The Council of Trent stereotyped its dogmas, and those that have been added since can be easily made appendices to the mediæval system. And everything else, we must remember, must be subordinated to theology.

We get a very good idea of "Catholic education" from the lectures delivered by Cardinal Newman on becoming for a time Rector of the Roman Catholic University of Dublin. They were upon *The Scope and Nature of University Education*. In contrast to the German idea which Newman never appreciated, he contends that a university should not seek scientific or philosophical discovery, but content itself with diffusing knowledge which already exists. "If its object were scientific and philosophic discovery," he says, "I do not see why a university should have students; if religious training, I do not see how it can be the seat of literature and science." He accordingly boldly asks, "Has the Supreme Pontiff any obligation or duty at all towards secular knowledge as such? Would it become his apostolical ministry and his descent from the fisherman to have a zeal for the Baconian or other philosophy of man for its own sake? Is the vicar of Christ bound by office or by vow to be the preacher of the theory of gravitation, or a martyr for electro-magnetism? Would he be acquitting himself of the dispensation committed to him, if he were smitten with an abstract love of these matters, however true, or beautiful, or ingenious, or useful? Or rather does he not contemplate such achievement of the intellect, as far as he contemplates them, solely and simply in their relation to the interests of revealed truth?"¹ Accordingly we find him discussing

¹ Cf. Newman's *Scope and Nature of University Education*, second edition, 1859, pp. 10, 11.

theology at the outset, then the relation of theology to the other branches of knowledge, and the duties of the Church towards liberal knowledge. Everywhere it is the sectarian view of things. Sectarian science, sectarian literature, sectarian art, this is what is really meant by Catholic education. What can be said on the other side must not be seen; and so the Church puts the best literature of the world into its *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. Here, for example, is a summary of what was prohibited in 1870, the year of infallibility:—The works of the following historians—Hallam, Burnet, Hume, Gibbon, Mosheim, Sismondi, Bayle, Prideaux, Botta, Sarpi, Ranke; the works of the following philosophers—Malebranche, Spinoza, Kant, Locke, Bacon, Descartes, Whately, Cousin; the works of publicists like Montesquieu and Grotius, and of eminent poets like Ariosto and Milton. The writings also of the Reformers, the Protestant versions of the Bible, all Protestant catechisms, creeds, publications of synodal acts, of conferences and of disputations, liturgies; also dictionaries and lexicons—like the lexicon of Stephanus—unless they have been previously purged of heretical passages, are prohibited *en masse*.¹ What kind of education is possible on sectarian lines like these? Only sectarian and narrow-minded bigots, only spiritual *slaves*, can be evolved out of such limitations. And so “Catholic education” degenerates into the purest and most miserable sectarianism which was ever misnamed education.

The Church of Rome cannot believe in truth, but only in her own representations of truth. She accordingly insists on educating young and old; primary, intermediate and higher education must be committed to officials of the Church, monks and nuns if possible; just as we have seen she insists through the confessional on superintending the

¹ Cf. Fisher's *Reformation*, n. p. 527.

lives and secrets of all ranks and conditions of men, women, and children.

Why Protestant nations should be expected to pay either directly or indirectly for sectarian science and sectarian literature passes understanding. Neither science nor literature should have a sectarian tinge; it will not have, if truth is believed in as catholic and as one!

Into the competition between Protestant and Roman Catholic institutions we cannot here enter. It is sufficient to affirm that if we want the highest scientific attainment, the broadest culture, the fullest education, we must seek these amid the Protestant institutions of England, of America, of Holland, and of Germany; we cannot have them in the Roman Catholic institutions of the Latin nations. Education for the last four centuries has had its favoured homes among the Protestant nations.

§ 4. *Protestant Literature casts Roman Catholic Literature into the shade*

We might imagine that in a Church in which theology must dominate everything, notable contributions would be made by Roman Catholic writers to this subject. But one need only compare Werner's *History of Catholic Theology*¹ with Dorner's *History of Protestant Theology*, to see that the latter is in every way "a triumph of Protestant science over that of the Romish Church." Of Roman Catholic books of biblical literature, a department where the boasted infallible guide should surely be busy supplying help, it has been said that for a century and a half they have been so meagre, scanty, and unimportant, that at this moment there are not a dozen in English deserving of attention.² To be

¹ *Geschichte der Katholischen Theologie seit dem Trienter Concil bis zur Gegenwart*, von Dr Karl Werner, München, 1866.

² Cf. Littledale's *Reasons Against Joining the Church of Rome*, p. 13.

intelligent theologians, we would require to resort to the books condemned in the *Index*. And this holds good also regarding other literature. Protestant poets, historians, and philosophers everywhere hold the field. For in the eye of Protestantism there should be no "secular knowledge." All is sacred, so far as it is true. The poetry of Roman Catholicism makes a poor show beside that of Protestantism; and, with the exception of the poetry of Dryden, Pope, Moore, and Aubrey de Vere, with a few first-class lyrics from Newman and Faber, we have nothing from the Roman side of civilisation since Dante which is worth a straw. In fact, if we want a pretty accurate list of the foremost literary and theological writers of recent times, we have simply to find out what worthies the Pope has put into the *Index*, and there we are pretty certain to have the cream of the literature of the age! How under such conditions can Roman Catholics be in any broad sense of the term an educated people?

CHAPTER XXVI

PROTESTANTISM AND MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

§ 1. *The Reformers and Missionary Enterprise*

It has been a source of difficulty and of regret with some ardent friends of Christian missions that the Reformers did not exhibit an immediate interest in the missionary enterprise. But if we try to appreciate their real position, we shall be led to a conclusion not unfavourable to these great men. The man who could arrange for the deliverance of the nuns from the convent at Nimptschen, and get them suitably looked after until they were married, was not deficient either in philanthropy or enterprise. But Luther and his fellow-Reformers had to take things as they found them. Let us look at the matter in this way. We shall take Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin as the typical continental Reformers. These three men exercised commanding influence in Europe, yet they were all their lives in the most straitened circumstances. Though great authors, they drove no bargains about their books. Luther, if we remember right, never received anything for his literary labour, and Calvin was only able to meet a few pressing debts out of what the booksellers allowed him. Melanchthon had to rock the cradle with one hand, while he held his book with the other. If it had not been for the splendid management of Luther's Katie, the Reformer would have been in pinches till the very close of his career. An American editor has recently published alongside of

Jeremy Bentham's *Letters against the Usury Laws* a letter of John Calvin which, though stated in a patronising way to be "little known and of no great importance," yet handles the subject in a way which would do no discredit to a nineteenth-century critic or economist. But the reason it is mentioned here is that Calvin's reasoning on the subject was purely speculative, as he never had any surplus money to lend. In fact, these three most influential Reformers were three of the poorest men in Europe. With the battle at their very doors, fighting for very life, so to speak, how could they be expected to contemplate or to organise a mission to the heathen? ¹ Luther was kept all his life waiting for the council which the Pope so hesitated to summon; and the "missionary enterprise" of the time consisted chiefly in the Pope's influence being brought to bear on the Emperor to *attack the Turks*! The Church of Rome had made missionary enterprise militant by inspiring the crusades, and it would require time before the Reformers could appreciate "the marching orders" of the Church. Besides, Luther had an idea that the end of the age was at hand, and all that he could do was to save as many in Christendom as he could through a preached gospel. Add to all this the fact that the Protestants in the first age of the Reformation were not geographically in a situation to establish missions among the heathen. The dominion of the sea was then in the hands of the Roman Catholic Powers, and in the seventeenth century Protestants were kept too busy defending their faith in Europe to think of enterprises abroad. It was no wonder, in these circumstances, that Protestantism could not at once take up the problem of missions. In fact, the design of Providence in the sixteenth century seems to have been to give the Church of Rome her chance of showing what her missions mean.

¹ Cf. New York *Economic Tracts*, first and second series, No. iv., 1884.

We shall see immediately what a failure they have been, and must be. It was when Romanism failed to save the heathen world that Protestantism got its opportunity. Meanwhile the Reformers had ample work on hand, in consolidating the Churches, in organising education, and in resisting their implacable foe.

§ 2. *Roman Catholic Missions superficial and ephemeral*

We turn now to the missions of the Church of Rome. What is the baggage of the Romish missionary? Here is the list, as furnished by one of their number:—"A breviary for his own private use, a missal for the service of his church, a patina for the communion, chaplets, crucifixes, medals, and images for his converts." Prepared in this way for action, what does he lead us to expect from him? His object is not to instruct, but to baptise and to enrol under the banner of Rome. He does not need to make a serious study of the native language, or to train the natives to write and read what they have from childhood spoken. He only requires a sufficient vocabulary to make his methods intelligible to the natives. All he wants is to recite his formula, baptise as many as possible, teach them the *Pater* and *Ave* by heart, teach them to bow, to say the rosary, to carry a cross in procession; and so enlist them in the army of the Church. Now that this is no exaggeration may be seen in the life of such a man as Francis Xavier. All acknowledge that he had an apostolic spirit, and endured great hardships in prosecuting his mission in the East. Yet it is admitted that "he knew little of the native languages, that he made converts who were in reality no converts, that he had an overweening faith, not peculiar to the sixteenth century, in the efficacy of infant baptism." He made converts by the thousand, sometimes 10,000 a month;

but his methods were superficial and his work ephemeral. When men start with the notion that baptismal water regenerates, the conversion of a country becomes a mere question of coaxing and mechanics. Persuade the people to undergo the magical rite; even subject them to it by artifice, if they will not accept of it openly; and lo, they are won to Christianity! To such a pitch was proselytism carried by Xavier's successors that Alexander of Rhodes, in consort with Robert de Nobili, actually formulated the principle that the passage from paganism to Christianity should be made as insensible as possible; in plain terms, Christianity was to be so paganised in its forms and ceremonies that the proselytes would pass over without fear. Numerical success at such a cheap rate is hardly worth reckoning. Work done in such a hasty, superficial fashion, is hardly worth doing. It is the "shoddy" of evangelism. Sea and land may be compassed to make the proselyte, but he is hardly worth the making!¹

For work so superficial and so ephemeral, the amount dedicated every year is not excessive, considering the immense numerical size of the Roman Church. It is not easy to get at the exact statistics, as so much secrecy is associated with the Propagandism; but it was in 1878 under a quarter of a million pounds (£244,220), and we have no reason to believe this figure has been very largely increased. Funds are raised through the sale of miraculous medals and indulgences to the interested, so that the giving is made as easy as possible. It amounts on the average to about a third of a penny a year per individual!² Now it is not wonderful, we think, that

¹ Cf. Sir John W. Kaye's *Christianity in India*, London, 1859, pp. 18-30; see also Roussel's *Catholic and Protestant Nations Compared*, vol. i. p. 295, etc.

² Cf. Roussel, *ut supra*, vol. i. p. 289, etc.; also Bersier's *Sermons*, tome iv., Paris, 1870, pp. 125-181, on "Les Missions Protestantes."

Protestant missions should have their turn at the great problem, seeing that in the Roman Catholic case the method has been so superficial and unsatisfactory.¹

§ 3. *Protestant Missions more thorough in their methods and correspondingly more durable in their results*

When a Protestant missionary sets out, it has been said, his baggage consists of a book, a printing press, and a case of surgical instruments. That is to say, he goes out to circulate the Bible as soon as possible in the native language. If the language has never been reduced to writing, he begins to do this, compiles his dictionary, his grammar, and pushes on the translation of the Scriptures into the dialect of the people. That they may be able to use the book, the natives must be taught to read, and so the school becomes the foundation of the missionary enterprise. With the Bible other books are soon associated, so that Protestant mission work is especially *educational*. It is to Protestant missionaries for the most part that the heathen races are indebted for the translations of the Scriptures, which become as a rule, like Luther's translation for the German people, the beginning of the national literature.

Having thus broken ground, the Protestant missionary next proceeds to gather the natives into both schools and churches. His great office is teaching, and he seeks to lift the people into "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as given in the face of Jesus Christ." He does not proceed in any feverish haste. He instructs his catechumens carefully, and only after satisfactory evidence that their profession is a credible one, does he receive them into the Christian Church.

¹ Cf. *A Handbook of Foreign Missions*, with an appendix on Roman Catholic Missions, London 1888 ; also *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, by Rev. J. S. Dennis, D.D., 3 vols.

Now it is surely instructive to find the sovereignty of the sea passing out of Roman Catholic hands into Protestant, when the Roman Church had demonstrated her inability to solve the problem of missions. It has, moreover, been pointed out that Romanism makes little way among the Jews in consequence of the idolatry it embodies. To Protestantism accordingly the access to heathen nations and to the Jews has been at length given. We do not say that the missionary enterprise has been conducted by Protestants in the wisest way, or in the most economical. A writer recently deceased has given us a very vigorous little volume entitled *Christian Missions to Wrong Places, Among Wrong Races, and in Wrong Hands*.¹ He thinks that a large amount of Christian effort has been lost in Labrador and South Sea Missions, upon races that are doomed to very early death, which might have been more profitably expended upon more durable material. He thinks the apostles devoted their energies to paganism in its more enduring forms, and so teach us the proper policy. But we have not the full record of apostolic labour. We are hardly warranted in supposing that the apostles clung to the shores of the Mediterranean sea, allowing distant heathenism to perish. They went a good deal farther, we may well believe, than is recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*; they went, we may be sure, where they found an opening and where the Spirit prompted them to go, as churches and individuals must do to-day. Moreover, providence has been guiding the Protestant attack on heathenism in a very notable way. When we look at heathenism geographically, we must conclude that Hindostan constitutes the centre of the line which Christianity must carry. Here have we, moreover, races with great vitality. Now by a remarkable series of events this great

¹ By A. C. Geikie, D.D., late of Bathurst, N.S. Wales, London, 1871.

peninsula passed from Roman Catholic to Protestant hands, and it is now the scene of a combined attack on the part of the various Protestant Churches which can, the experts now tell us, have only one issue, the capture of the country for Christ. Even those who, like the late Keshub Chunder Sen, decline to surrender themselves, are yet candid enough to admit that Jesus is at present *ipso facto* the real ruler of India!¹ And when the heathen centre is carried, Christianity will be able to give an excellent account of its staggering wings. East and west of Hindostan the mission is being earnestly prosecuted, and the complete capture of the Heathen world is only a matter of time. It has been calculated that the success of missions in this nineteenth century has been as remarkable as it ever was in the apostolic age. And we are undoubtedly learning both to appreciate Christianity's early victories better, and to organise better the battles which are yet to be won. The study of the missionary problem is more thorough and intelligent every year, and we are morally certain that the right lines of effort are being reached. Missions must educate the people, if the Bible as the great means of grace is to have free course and be glorified. Missions must have a medical and social, as well as an educational side. There must be Zenana missions to women as well as missions to men; there must be a native ministry provided, for heathenism cannot be captured by Americans or Europeans acting alone. Above all, the lines of evangelisation marked out by the Reformers must be pursued, if Christianity is to be triumphant.² Already the mission field of the world has

¹ *Lectures and Tracts*, London, 1870, p. 43, etc.

² Cf. Christlieb's *Protestant Missions to the Heathen*, Hastie's Translation, 1882; also *Neglected Factors in the Study of the Early Progress of Christianity*, by Professor Orr, D.D., London, 1899; also Warneck's *Modern Missions and Culture*, Edinburgh, 1883; *History of Protestant Missions*, Edinburgh, 1884; Lowe's *Medical Missions: Their Place and Power*, London, 1886.

afforded Protestants the opportunity of exhibiting the consideration, cordiality, and unity of spirit which should characterise the various denominations accepting the Reformed faith. The cordiality will infect the home Churches also. Dividing the field into suitable sections, the different denominations are able to devote themselves with unity of aim to the winning of the world to the common Master. To this more enduring work of Protestant missions, more than five times the amount dedicated by the Romish propaganda is dedicated by various Protestant societies. In addition the Bible and Tract Societies which supply the literature of the mission have huge annual incomes, so that the Master's kingdom is being greatly hastened. The issue need not be in doubt. To Protestant missions the lion's share of the world's evangelisation will be committed.

It is surely remarkable that at the close of this nineteenth century some 3000 students at various colleges in Europe and America have dedicated themselves to work among the heathen, wherever and whenever God opens up their way. And now, in view of the twentieth century, various Churches are collecting thanksgiving funds which bid fair to cast all previous contributions to Christ's cause into the shade. It has been fairly urged that between this prompting to personal consecration and this prompting to financial consecration there must be a holy affinity, and so we may expect with the dawn of the twentieth century such a development of missionary enterprise as has not been witnessed in the world before. That this will react wholesomely upon the home Churches is certain. If the nineteenth century has seen the enterprise of Protestant missions fairly and intelligently prosecuted, the twentieth century ought to see the chief strongholds of heathenism captured and the battle well-nigh won.¹

¹ Cf. Dennis' *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, 3 vols., *passim*.

CHAPTER XXVII

PROTESTANTISM AND PROGRESS

§ 1. *The Contrast between Protestant and Roman Catholic Countries*

WE now proceed to estimate the influence of the two systems upon national progress. We can easily understand how a system which fosters thought and discussion and self-reliance must carry the nations accepting it to heights of influence and success which nations bowing to pretended authority can never reach. The verdict of history, by which all systems must abide, is in favour of Protestantism. We need not wonder at the works of Lord Macaulay being put into the *Index*. Here is his verdict upon the two systems in their relation to national progress:—"From the time when the barbarians overran the Western Empire," he says, "to the time of the revival of letters, the influence of the Church of Rome had been generally favourable to science, to civilisation, and to good government; but during the last three centuries, to stunt the growth of the human mind has been her chief object. Throughout Christendom, whatever advance has been made in knowledge, in freedom, in wealth, and in the arts of life, has been made in spite of her, and has everywhere been in inverse proportion to her power. The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor, while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and

barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes and statesmen, philosophers, and poets. Whoever, knowing what Italy and Scotland naturally are, and what, four hundred years ago, they actually were, shall now compare the country round Rome with the country round Edinburgh, will be able to form some judgment as to the tendency of papal domination. The descent of Spain, once the first among monarchies, to the lowest depths of degradation; the elevation of Holland, in spite of many natural disadvantages, to a position such as no commonwealth so small has ever reached, teach the same lesson. Whoever passes in Germany from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant principality, in Switzerland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant canton, in Ireland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant county, finds that he has passed from a lower to a higher grade of civilisation. On the other side of the Atlantic the same law prevails. The Protestants of the United States have left far behind them the Roman Catholics of Mexico, Peru, and Brazil. The Roman Catholics of Lower Canada remain inert, while the whole continent round them is in a ferment with Protestant activity and enterprise. The French have doubtless shown an energy and an intelligence which, even when misdirected, have justly entitled them to be called a great people. But this apparent exception, when examined, will be found to confirm the rule; for in no country that is called Roman Catholic has the Roman Catholic Church, during several generations, possessed so little authority as in France.”¹ Carlyle’s testimony may also be quoted:—“Austria, Spain, Italy, France, Poland—the offer of the Reformation was made everywhere, and it is curious to see what has become of the

¹ Cf. Lord Macaulay’s *History of England from Accession of James II.*, vol. i. chap. .

nations that would not hear it. In all countries were some that accepted; but in many there were not enough, and the rest, slowly or swiftly, with fatal, difficult industry, continued to burn them out. Austria was once full of Protestants, but the hide-bound Flemish-Spanish Kaiser-element presiding over it, obstinately for two centuries, kept saying, 'No; we, with our dull, obstinate, Cimburgis under-lip, and lazy eyes, with our ponderous Austrian depth of Habituality, and indolence of Intellect, we prefer steady darkness to uncertain new Light!' and all men may see where Austria now is. Spain still more; poor Spain going about at this time making its 'pronunciamentos.' . . . Italy too had its Protestants, but Italy killed them—managed to extinguish Protestantism. Italy put up with practical lies of all kinds, and, shrugging its shoulders, preferred going into Dillettantism and the Fine Arts. The Italians, instead of the sacred service of Fact and Performance, did Music, Painting, and the like, till even that has become impossible for them; and no noble nation, sunk from virtue to *virtù*, ever offered such a spectacle before. . . . But sharpest-cut example is France, to which we constantly return for illustration. France, with its keen intellect, saw the truth, and saw the falsity, in those Protestant times, and, with its ardour of generous impulse, was prone enough to adopt the former. France was within a hair's-breadth of becoming actually Protestant; but France saw good to massacre Protestantism, and end it in the night of St Bartholomew, 1572. . . . The genius of Fact and Veracity accordingly withdrew, was staved off, got kept away for two hundred years. But the Writ of Summons had been served; Heaven's messenger could not stay away forever; no, he returned duly, with accounts run up, on compound interest, to the actual hour, in 1792; and then, at last, there had to be a 'Protestantism,' and we know of what

kind that was.”¹ The pictures given us by these two historians are at once faithful and impressive !

§ 2. *The Contrast not due to differences of Race*

“ By their fruits ye shall know them ” applies to systems as well as to individuals. We are following here as before the experimental method. The facts being thus in favour of Protestantism, may they not be accounted for by differences of race ? This is the apology which is set up by some for Roman Catholic failure. We shall take as our next witness the late M. de Laveleye, a Belgian economist, who began as a Roman Catholic, and through his study of the two systems from the economic side came over to Protestantism. Some time ago he wrote a long article in the *Revue de Belgique* on the “ Future of the Catholic Peoples,” and it was republished in Paris as a separate pamphlet. A few paragraphs translated from it will set the subject in a clear light. Upon this question of race he says : “ It is admitted that the Scotch and the Irish are of the same origin. (Both are Celts.) The one and the other have been subdued by the English. (The Scotch would not admit M. de Laveleye’s statement here.) Up to the sixteenth century Ireland was much more civilised than Scotland. The green isle was during the early middle ages a home of civilisation, when Scotland was still a haunt of barbarians. Since the Scotch adopted the Reformation, however, they have outstripped even the English. Climate and the nature of the soil prevent Scotland from being as rich as England ; but Macaulay avers that since the seventeenth century Scotchmen outstrip Englishmen in everything. Ireland, on the contrary, devoted to Ultramontaniam, is poor, miserable, agitated by the spirit of rebellion, and seems incapable of raising herself up again by her own forces. What a contrast,” he continues,

¹ *History of Frederick the Second*, Harper’s edition, vol. i. p. 202, etc.

“even in Ireland, between Connaught, exclusively Catholic, and Ulster, where Protestantism prevails! Ulster is enriched by industry. Connaught presents the picture of the last extremities of human misery. . . . Let us go into Switzerland, and compare the situation of the cantons of Neuchatel, Vaud, and Geneva (especially before the recent immigration of Catholic Savoyards) with that of Lucerne, of Haut Valais, and of the forest cantons. The former outstrip the latter in an extraordinary fashion in education, literature, fine arts, industry, commerce, riches, property—in a word, in civilisation under all its aspects and in all its acceptations. The first belong to the Latin race, but are Protestants; the second are Germans, but obedient to Rome. It is then the worship, and not the race, which is the cause of the superiority of the first named.”¹

§ 3. *Protestantism more favourable than Roman Catholicism to the growth of Population*

Now we have already seen how Protestantism favours family life; makes marriage something better than a sacrament, the “holy estate of matrimony,” and consecrates family life and all its incomparable education. The Church of Rome on the other hand makes “single-blessedness” a holier condition than matrimony; discourages marriage in the case of priests and nuns, although physically they might do much to strengthen and perpetuate the race; and in the most provoking fashion checks population. Let us see the inevitable result. We must remember, however, that it was only about the beginning of this century that nations commenced to take a careful census of their respec-

¹ Cf. *De L'Avenir des Peuples Catholiques*, Étude d'Économie Sociale, par Émile de Laveleye, Paris, 1875, pp. 4-6. The same view will be found wrought out in great detail in Napoleon Roussel's large work, *Catholic Nations and Protestant Nations Compared*, 2 vols., London, 1855.

tive populations. For the preceding centuries we are left largely to conjecture. There is good reason for believing that the population of Europe did not materially increase, if it increased at all, from the days of Julius Cæsar to the Reformation. At these two periods, we have reason to believe, the population of Europe did not exceed 100 or 120 millions; and 100 years ago the European population could not have been more than 150 millions. We now know that it has risen to 330 millions—*i.e.* 180 millions of an increase in the century. And when we estimate the population of Europe religiously, it gives us something like the following results:—Protestants in, say, 1786, 37,000,000; in 1886, 85,000,000. Roman Catholics in 1786, 80,000,000; in 1886, 154,000,000. Greek Church in 1786, 40,000,000; in 1886, 83,000,000. If we take America and the British Colonies into our calculation also, they will give us for Protestants in 1786, 2,700,000; in 1886, 47,000,000; Roman Catholics in 1786, 190,000; in 1886, 9,930,000. That is a grand total for Europe and America of Protestants in 1786 of 37,700,000; in 1886, 134,000,000. Roman Catholics in 1786, 80,190,000; in 1886, 163,000,000. Greek Church in 1786, 40,000,000; in 1886, 83,000,000. That is to say, Protestantism has increased in the last century nearly fourfold, as against a little over a twofold progress in the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches. It appears, then, from statistics that Protestantism is increasing at something like double the rate of Roman Catholicism, and is bound to pass its rival in the matter of numbers in the near future.

Now what has the Church of Rome to say in answer to these facts? A Spanish monk called Balmez wrote an elaborate reply some years ago to Guizot's *History of Civilization*, in which he tries to show that Roman

Catholicism is more favourable than Protestantism to human welfare. When we go to his work, we find a chapter on "Virginity in its Social Aspect," and amid a lot of rhodomontade against Luther for his marriage with the nun, Catherine von Bora, we find him constrained to remark, in view of this out-populating power of Protestantism, that "the happiness of nations is not necessarily in proportion to the increase of their population," a truism which nobody has any interest in denying, but which hardly can be taken as an answer to the Protestant argument. He observes, moreover, regarding Protestant England, "The nation which has carried these fatal principles (as he regards them) to the fullest extent, now finds itself overcharged with men and products." But the Spaniard failed to see in Anglo-Saxon colonisation the Providential outlet for the surplus population, and in exportation the natural outlet for surplus products; and in both one of the secrets of the progress of Protestantism.¹ We take it, then, that Rome has no sufficient answer to these facts. She sees the out-populating power of Protestantism, and cannot now reverse the artificial checks which she has placed upon the progress of population.

§ 4. *Protestantism more favourable than Roman Catholicism to the increase of Wealth*

We may see at a glance that the Protestant nations are in the van in the march of industry. England and America are, out of sight, the wealthiest nations of the world; and *ceteris paribus* it will be found that Protestant nations are wealthier than Roman Catholic nations. M. Roussel in his great work already referred to gives ample proof of

¹ Cf. *Protestantism and Catholicity compared in their effects on the Civilisation of Europe*, by Rev. J. Balmez, London, 1849, p. 109, etc.

this. We prefer M. de Laveleye's more recent summary. He directs attention to the public funds of Protestant nations as eliciting more confidence than those of Roman Catholic nations. He says : "The English three per cents rise above 92 ; the French three per cents waver about 60. The stock of Holland, of Prussia, of Denmark, of Sweden (all Protestant nations) is at least at par ; that of Austria, of Italy, of Spain, and of Portugal (all Roman Catholic nations) is less by a third or even by a half." We can test the matter practically for ourselves. When we have any little money to invest and desire good investments, we find our money gravitating towards Protestant countries, where the conditions of production are, as a matter of fact, most favourably supplied. Not only so, but even in Roman Catholic countries the Protestants seem by a natural law to become the capitalists. "Wherever," says M. de Laveleye, "in the same country the two religions are face to face, the Protestants are more active, more industrious, more economical, and, in consequence, richer than the Catholics. In the United States, says De Tocqueville, the majority of the Catholics are poor. In Canada, the great jobs, the industries, the commerce, the principal shops in the cities are in the hands of Protestants. M. Audiganne in his remarkable studies upon the working population in France, notes the superiority of Protestants in industry, and his testimony is the less suspected that he does not attribute this superiority to Protestantism. 'The majority of the labouring classes,' he says, 'notably the taffeta-makers, are Catholics, whilst the chiefs of industry and of commerce, the capitalists in short, appertain to the reformed religion.' . . . Before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, those of the reformed faith somehow excelled in all the branches of industry, and the Catholics, who could not bear the competition, tried to forbid them

from 1662, by many successive edicts, the exercise of different industries in which they excelled. After their expulsion from France, the Protestants carried into England, Prussia, and Holland their spirit of enterprise and of economy; they enriched the districts where they settled. It is to the Latins of the reformed faith that the Germans owe in part their progress. The refugees of the revocation have introduced into England different industries . . . and it is the disciples of Calvin who have civilised Scotland.”¹ Here then are the patent facts. Protestantism is more favourable than Roman Catholicism to the acquisition of wealth. With its endless holy days, Romanism interferes with steady industry and handicaps its devotees in the inevitable competition. Protestantism practically controls the markets of the world! It is of no avail to say, as poor Cardinal Newman did, that the Catholic Church is so absorbed with things spiritual and unseen as to be more indifferent than Protestantism to the things of this world. As a matter of fact, it is not the spirituality of the devotees, but their ignorance, their laziness, and unmanly dependence upon others, which account for the general poverty and stagnation of Roman Catholic countries and peoples.

§ 5. *Protestantism more favourable than Roman Catholicism to good government*

It will be found also that Protestantism has been more favourable to good government than Roman Catholicism. Absolute monarchies are giving place to limited monarchies, and representative government, the government of the people by the people, is in Protestant countries replacing the ancient despotism. This is only what we might expect from a movement which made the believing laity all priests unto

¹ M. de Laveleye, *ut supra*, pp. 5-7.

God, and raised the individual to self-reliance and self-respect. "The Reformation," says M. de Laveleye, "has favoured the progress of the people who adopted it, because it has allowed them to found free institutions, whilst Catholicism conducts to despotism and to anarchy, and often, alternately, to the one and to the other. The natural government of Protestant people is," he adds, "representative government. . . . Bossuet, in his *Politics drawn from Holy Scripture*, traces the conditions of government which agree with a Catholic country. 'God establishes kings as His ministers, and reigns by them over the people.' 'Royal authority is absolute.' 'The prince ought not to render an account to anyone of that which he commands.' 'It is necessary to obey princes as we should justice itself. They are gods, and participate in some fashion in divine independence.' 'Subjects ought only to oppose to the violence of princes respectful remonstrances, without mutiny and without murmur.'"¹ The same tendency may be seen in even such a liberal Roman Catholic as the late Dr Döllinger, who in his recently published *Studies in European History* tries to make out as a law of human nature a preference for monarchy, even though it be an uncompromising despotism. He should have said of "Roman Catholic" human nature! Indeed, demands for self-government on the part of strict Roman Catholics resolve themselves into demands for priestly power, since the laity are expected to obey the hierarchy, or the arbiters of life and death will know the reason why. The policy pursued by a Roman Catholic party in the midst of representative institutions can only be an opportunist policy with sectarianism as its end. The fundamental fallacy of the Church of Rome is that it is the kingdom of God visible, and the kingdom shall be perfected only when individuals and families and States submit to the papal

¹ M. de Laveleye, *ut supra*, n. p. 18.

yoke.¹ Logically, as M. de Laveleye shows, in a Catholic country, "the government ought to be despotic; at first, because such is that of the Church, which serves for the type; secondly, because that, as kings hold their power directly from God or from the Pope, this power can be neither limited nor controlled. The Reformation, on the contrary, being a return to primitive Christianity, engenders everywhere the spirit of liberty and of resistance to absolutism. It tends to the birth of republican and constitutional institutions. The Protestant recognises in religion only one single authority—the Bible. He does not bow before the authority of a man as the Catholic does; he examines and discusses for himself."²

It will thus be seen that Protestantism has "a promise for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come," which Romanism does not enjoy. No special pleading by a Balmez or a Newman or a Brownson can shut out from candid inquirers the fact that Romanism is the foe of real progress. And by this verdict of history the systems will have to abide.

¹ Cf. *Der Deutsche Protestantismus von einem deutschen Theologen*, Frankfurt, 1847, s. 476. This fine monograph, though published anonymously, is known to have been the work of Hundeschagen, the Professor at Bonn. His posthumously published smaller writings in two large volumes, edited by Christlieb, contain much valuable exposition of the political tendencies of Protestantism and Romanism.

² M. de Laveleye, *ut supra*, p. 18.

CHAPTER XXVIII

PROTESTANTISM, AN UNCONQUERABLE AND ABIDING FORCE

§ 1. *Summary of the Book*

WE are now in a position to appreciate what the Protestant movement means, and to consider whether it is a spent force, or one that is destined to abide and to conquer. We have seen how it began in the experience of the immortal Luther, who was too matter of fact to be put off with anything but realities. Once he had "regained Paradise" through assurance of faith, he could not but invite his fellows to the same privilege. The word of promise, God's sure Word, became the charter of the new experience which renovated Europe. Before the "Faithful Promiser," Luther and his fellow-Reformers bowed as subjects grateful for salvation, and rejoicing in God's sovereignty. Every would-be lord of the conscience fled like owls and bats before the rising Sun of Righteousness, leaving the conscience to the guidance of Christ. The saintly souls, lifted into fellowship with God in Christ, became in consequence a grand communion, and realised their unity with the spirits of the just made perfect, as well as with those being made perfect here. As priests unto God, they were encouraged to carry consecration into all things and to swallow up the secular and worldly in a higher and still higher Christian life. Ministers and sacraments were instruments and means of grace for souls who are being sanctified; and the "wonders" seen in Holy Scripture be-

come the only miracles of the modern world. The individual, moreover, is not the only subject of salvation ; the family is being saved, and society is being saved through the Protestant spirit ; education, missionary enterprise, and national progress are all best secured by Protestantism. And then beyond this present life and world, Protestantism discerns an everlasting opportunity of showing gratitude to God and of obeying His commands.

No wonder that Froude says regarding the Reformers : "The history of the last three centuries has been a signal evidence that in taking the Bible for their rule in the place of the Decretals, they had forfeited no privilege and lost no grace."¹ The history of Protestantism has been a history of realities, a history of experiences which were regarded as more precious than life, a history of brave men and women who contended earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. It may have manifested itself in forms of criticism of a very radical description ; but underneath the whole there was the sincere desire to get at the facts and the truth, persuaded that all facts are revelations, and that truth is one. The history of Romanism, on the other hand, has been that of resistance to revision and to reform. The Reformers waited for the Church to reform herself ; only when she refused doggedly to do so, and insisted not merely on the old errors but on new ones, did they separate themselves from the Roman schism.

The Middle Ages have been called the "bloom-time" of the Church of Rome ; since then the bloom has passed away, and the fruit she has produced may be estimated by the decline of the Catholic nations.

"The Church of Rome," says a writer, "perpetually boasts of her antiquity ; but will the facts of the case sustain the bold pretension ? We say, no. The Council

¹ Cf. *Lectures on the Council of Trent*, *ut supra*, p. 103.

of Trent was the final settlement of her platform; she is not quite three centuries old (these words were written in 1843), and Protestantism is beyond all contradiction her senior. The symbol of Pope Pius IV., to which every Roman Catholic is now required to give his assent, bears date thirty-four years later than the confession of Augsburg, which contains the grand essentials of the Protestant faith. If the Church of Rome shall tauntingly interrogate Protestants — ‘Where was your religion before Luther?’ They may retort upon her and ask, ‘Where was your religion before the Council of Trent, which added twelve new articles of faith to the Nicene Creed?’ But shall Protestants content themselves with this retort? or shall they not rather take higher ground, and say at once to the Romanist, ‘Our religion is where yours never was, in the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever?’ It was the glory of the Reformation that it made a bold stand for ancient apostolic truth, in opposition to the corrupt novelties of eleven hundred years of steady and resolute departure from the faith of Christ. Protestantism was not itself a novelty, but the exposure of a novelty. It came not to proclaim a new doctrine; but to ‘contend earnestly for the faith once (for all) delivered to the saints.’”¹

§ 2. *The Law of Human Progress through Antagonism*

In a small book on the great subject of *The Secret of Christianity* the writer has tried to show that while the law of paganism has been that of *development*, the law of Christianity has been that of *antagonism*. “Its aim, either in dealing with the individual or the nation,” he says, “is to convert, to regenerate. It finds one tendency of the human spirit carried to fatal extremes, and forthwith it begins to oppose that tendency. It arouses the counter-

¹ Cf. Dr Morison’s *Protestant Reformation*, 1843, p. 488.

impulse; it strives to develop that side of the human spirit which had been stunted and paralyzed by this abnormal development of the other. Upon the life of the East, it brings to bear the spirit of the West; upon the life of the West it brings to bear the spirit of the East. In a word, it arrays itself in constant antagonism to the special tendency that controls the life of its worshippers."¹ Mr Hebbard accordingly is careful to point out that the Oriental element in Christianity was in due season antagonised by a Hellenic factor, which was succeeded by a Catholic age during which the Oriental factor again asserted itself, to be followed by the Protestant age when, as he thinks, the Hellenic factor is antagonising once more the Oriental, and so securing the progress of Religion. He on this theory looks into the Catholic age and credits it with supplanting the vandalism which had overwhelmed the Roman Empire, by feudalism, through which the vandals were transformed from soldiers into serfs, and rooted to the soil. Out of this arose in due season the love of country. Woman also, he thinks, received more consideration through the conventual life and ideals of the Middle Ages than she had done amid the dangerous liberty of Greece. He also credits the Middle Ages with man's love of nature, which he thinks the Gothic architecture and painting of that quiet time illustrate. But the Protestant age came round, when the doctrine of human equality arose to sound the death-knell of feudalism; to it we also owe, he thinks, the industrial movement, the historic sense, and the rise of science properly so called. We cannot follow our author into the details of his very able generalisation. What concerns us here is, has the Protestant antagonism exhausted itself? and is it going to give place to a counter-

¹ Cf. *The Secret of Christianity*, by S. S. Hebbard, Boston, 1874, pp. 96, 97.

movement? Mr Hebbard thinks that it is, for the following reason: "It is quite evident that the free humanistic spirit is rapidly approaching the climax of its development. It is sweeping forward to its final excesses. It has pushed the great body of men into a condition of doubt, of utter indifference to spiritual things, of intense worldliness, like that which characterised the last days of classical civilisation. Hence in accordance with its fundamental law, Christianity must soon undergo another transformation. The sense of spiritual need will again be aroused to its fullest activity. A new age of faith will begin."¹

Now the mistake of this author is in attributing the doubt of the age to the Protestant movement, whereas it will be found that infinitely more of the doubt of the world is traceable to Romanism than to Protestantism. Rome is the refuge of men who at bottom are a prey to scepticism. But faith in her pretensions does not really put any period to their doubt. Cardinal Newman's is a case in point. It was his inveterate scepticism which drove him to surrender to Rome; and his *Grammar of Assent* is simply an apology for that surrender.² The great outbursts of scepticism have been in Roman Catholic countries, witness more especially the French Revolution! The Roman Catholic nations are honeycombed with doubt, as the experts tell us.

Moreover, the cure for doubt can never be found in authority, which has no real foundation for its claims. It can only be found in more thorough investigation of truth, and in the confidence which truth inspires. As a matter of fact antagonism to Rome has been the greatest factor in human progress since the sixteenth century. No wonder

¹ Cf. *The Secret of Christianity*, by S. S. Hebbard, Boston, 1814, p. 210.

² On Newman's scepticism, see Principal Fairbairn's *Catholicism, Roman and Anglican*, pp. 116-236.

that Mr Froude was led to say: "The Church (of Rome) pretended that outside the pale of the faithful human virtue was impossible. As if to repel the insolent assumption, new and noble races grew out of the fight for freedom. Before the Reformation the nations of Europe had been the mere subjects of kings and priests and nobles. The peoples rose everywhere, elevated by their cause to the level of their rulers. English, Scotch, Dutch, Swedes, Germans, were heated in the furnace and hammered in the stithy, till the iron in their blood grew to steel. France might reject the light, but it came back to France in the Revolution in forked lightning. The annals of mankind were enriched with splendid names. No Plutarch, no Pindar ever told or sang of grander men than those who fought and bled for European liberty. So has Nature worked in the training of our race that we may prize the spiritual freedom which it has cost so dear to win."¹ We want to know if this antagonism which has been so salutary since the sixteenth century is now to be renounced, or must it be perpetuated?

§ 3. *Protestantism bound to antagonise the Church of Rome so long as she maintains her present attitude*

In a lecture which has just been published by Professor Harnack, that great historian declares that there has been going on of late a "progressive Catholicizing of the Protestant Churches." By this he means the identification of the Church of Jesus Christ with the visible institution to which people happen to be attached, transferring without hesitation His promises to it. Thus he says regarding the Church in Germany: "Hardly any distinction is drawn between the Church of the Faith and the National Church; and all the decisions and regulations of the National Church, so far as

¹ Cf. *Lectures on the Council of Trent, ut supra*, p. 302.

they are agreeable to the greater number, are placed under the protection of sacred authority. 'The Church speaks,' 'the Church demands'—these are the expressions which are used towards the State and towards people of other opinions, as though we had to do with the Voice of God and the Voice of the World; whereas very frequently all that we have to do with is the wish of shortsighted majorities,—in the matter of questions, too, in which the State, grown, as it has, on a ground of Christian culture, offers a much safer guarantee."¹ Now this is exactly the error made by the Romanists in identifying their visible Church with the wider and grander invisible Church of Christ. The only remedy for this state of things is to betake ourselves to the old and thoughtful Protestant position, in which the real grandeur of Christ's Church was discerned and sectarianism impossible. The cry for an "undogmatic Christianity" is, Professor Harnack believes, a mistake; we must be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in us; and we need not fear the issue. Since the Church of Rome formulated her position at Trent, reconciliation with her is impossible with all thoughtful men. Men with a theory of apostolical succession to work may be ready to accommodate themselves to the Roman theology, but no others will ever dream of doing so. "So long," says Dr Kahn, "as the Tridentine positions remain in force must there be an insurmountable cleavage between Catholicism and Protestantism established."² Protestantism is bound to continue antagonistic to false and superstitious dogmas. It must be at least as enduring as Rome. If the Church of Rome, as we have seen, has increased in error, and has resiled from none of the anti-Christian dogmas which led

¹ Cf. *Thoughts on the Present Position of Protestantism*, by Adolf Harnack, London, 1899, pp. 32-34.

² Cf. *Der Gang der Kirche*, s. 376.

to the Reformation, it is the duty of all thoughtful Protestants to still oppose her. She is not changed in spirit; her boast is that she has nothing to repent of since she has been all along infallible. With an impenitent, implacable, unprogressive Church to deal with, Protestantism dare not relinquish the glorious contention for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

§ 4. *What Protestantism has yet to accomplish*

But we would understate the Protestant position were we to represent it as simply contending for the old principles. Protestantism has a great work before it to which its powers must be strenuously devoted. "Some people," said M. Coquerel, "are troubled when we tell them that the Reformation has been the mother of all the liberties; they are somewhat afraid of so much glory, and say that it would be desirable that the Reformation had not given birth to so many liberties. The Reformation will produce many other liberties yet; it is not at the end of its work; once the rights of man before God are recognised, many other rights flow out of these; only it will be to desire that the other liberties which support themselves upon the Protestant principle should be penetrated by the same spirit and profess the same respect for God. With the proviso of submission profound and complete to God and to duty, there is nothing to fear from any liberty. We do not wish to submit to any man because we wish to submit to God; we wish to have plenty of liberties that we may lay them at the feet of God; when all liberties have this character, there is everything to hope from them and nothing to fear."¹ And among the liberties of men yet to be secured by the Protestant spirit we must recognise freedom from every social

¹ Cf. *Le Catholicisme et Le Protestantisme*, par A. Coquerel Fils, Paris, 1864, p. 37.

and civil disability, and the lifting of society and the State into true consecration. There is plenty of reform to be secured from civil and ecclesiastical despotism; and this can only be by the maintenance and development of the Protestant spirit.

The Protestant spirit, we would say in conclusion, is the priestly spirit carried into everything, the spirit of felt consecration to God's service, the spirit of saintliness, which lives and moves and breathes in God! It is not the spirit of political partisanship; it is not the spirit of worldliness; it is not the spirit of blind submission to leaders, ecclesiastical or civil. It is the spirit of individual trust in a living Leader and Head, Christ Jesus, and of readiness to accept of His inspirations. Following Him as our High Priest, we shall as priests unto the Father find our mission and our destiny mapped out carefully for us by our Master. The real creed of Protestantism is the consecration of all that is not alien to the essence of Christianity. Protestantism has not been called into existence to trample on any genuine products of the human mind or expressions of human nature in literature, art, or social life, but to purify them all, and to reveal their connection with the supreme end of man's being. As a religion of the spirit and of liberty, we are bound to cherish it. It has favoured human progress in the past; it will promote it to the end of time.

THE END

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